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A D O N A T I O N

FROM

Rev. R. K. Rodgers D. D.

Received

Nov. 1874.

John Rodgers. 1774.



A
DEFENCE
OF
MODERATE
NONCONFORMITY

PART III.

Containing a Vindication,
Of the Silenc'd Ministers for continuing
their Ministry.
Of the Reasons of the People for adhering
to them and their Successors.
Of their Occasional Conformity, from the
Reflections of Mr. *Hoadly*.

To which are added Three Letters:

One to Mr. *Ollyffe*, in Answer to his *Second Defence of Ministerial Conformity*.

Another to Mr. *Hoadly*, in Answer to his *Defence of the Reasonableness of Conformity*. And,

A Third to the Author, from Mr. *Rastrick* of *Lynne* in *Norfolk*; giving an Historical Account of his Nonconformity.

By EDM. CALAMY, E. F. & N.

L O N D O N :

Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst* at the Bible and Three Crowns in *Cheapside*, near *Mercers-Chappel*; *Jon. Robinson* at the *Golden Lion* in *St. Paul's Church Yard*; and *J. Lawrence* at the *Angel* in the *Poultry*. 1705.

1787

THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

upon, has taken up more time than I could well spare from my other Occasions: And yet upon the whole I cannot say, that could I have foreseen what has since happen'd, I should either have omitted that Chapter, or made any very considerable Alterations in it.

Nothing in this whole Affair has been so Discouraging, as that I should be Attack'd by two Gentlemen of so great Worth as Mr. *Olyffe* and Mr. *Hadly*; and that in so Critical a Time as this, when our Common Danger so loudly calls us to *Peace and Union*, and a Hearty Brotherly Correspondence: This, with the length of the Debate, in an Age that is weary of Controversies, is the only thing that hath created me any uneasiness.

If it was so absolutely necessary as some have apprehended it, that
the

The Preface.

the Representation, I had given of *Nonconformity*, out of the Writings of the Silenced Ministers, should be distinctly Confuted, I should I must confess have been better pleased it had been managed by the open Enemies, than the avowed Friends of *Moderation*; and if *They* thought not fit to take any notice, I should have thought *Prudence* might have inclined *These* to keep Silence: But since their *Zeal* would not suffer it, I think they must Answer for the Consequences. To Standers by it cannot however but have an Odd Appearance, That one whose Latitude in the Matters disputed of is well known, should for defending the Cause of *Moderation*, be so vehemently charged as Assaulting the Church, by Men who are themselves accused by their angry Brethren, of not understanding the true Principles of the Church; nay, and of designing to Undermine it. This I

think will deserve a place among the *Peculiarities* of the Time we live in.

I am very sensible our Circumstances call for *Peace and Union*; and for that very Reason the *Zeal* of these Gentlemen appears unseasonable: But when they that are for *Peace and Union* on the only Terms that would make it Real, Firm and Lasting, are exposed as Obstructing it, I can't see how their Vindication can be any other than seasonable at any time. Silence in such a Case, would, to those that came after us, look like Betraying a Good Cause, which under the utmost Disadvantages has been hitherto Supported, and Defended by those that have gone before us.

A Hearty Brotherly Correspondence is indeed needful now if ever, Amongst all *who are for the Protestant*

stant Religion and the Present Establishment, in Opposition to such as mean a Popish Prince and a French Government. For which Reason, tho' I am far from being sensible I am liable to any Charge, I can yet freely declare; that if any thing I have said in the management of this Debate, tends to hinder that Good Understanding which is so absolutely necessary, or justly to offend any Persons that are Hearty in the Common Interest, I freely retract it, and wish it unsaid. But in the mean while I can't help thinking, that it Discovers no very Brotherly Temper, for such as give us good Words, to reckon it a Reflection on them or their Church, if when our Dissent is represented as altogether Humour-some and Groundless, we make it appear to the World we have Reason on our side.

- In some Cases, I can easily fall in with those who take Particular Answers to be wholly needless: Let the Restless Party, who are out of their Element while they cannot Persecute, scatter about ever so many *Memorials*, filled with intemperate Invectives against all that won't concur with them in running things to Extremity, I can't see that we for our Part have any Reason to regard them. Their Poison carries its own Antidote along with it. The Rudeness of their Clamours, and Notorious Falsity of their Charges, against the Brightest Ornaments of that Church whose Cause they pretend to Espouse, makes it Evident, they stick at nothing whereby they may Blacken such as stand in the way of their Designs. Who can think our present Bishops need a Vindication, to satisfy the World, that they are not Endeavouring to pull down that Constitution, of which they are the

upholding Pillars? Or that we *Dissenters* have any occasion to take pains to prove, that we did not *Burn* the City of *London* formerly, and are not now engaged in a Confederacy with the *Inhabitants* of the *Moon*, to compass the *Ruin* both of Church and State in order to our own Destruction? The *Government* may justly *Condemn* such *Writings* to the Flames for their *indecent* Reflections upon those that sit at Helm; but as far as we are *concerned*, we may be very easie they should survive, as a proof that they whose Malice against us, was so *Outrageous*, could find *nothing* to charge upon us, that could obtain the least Credit with Men of *Thought* and *Understanding*.

But as for the Cause depending between those that are in the *Constitution* of the Church, and those that are out of it, and yet are equally *Friends* to our *Civil Government*, I can't see why it maynt be debated

debated with freedom ; and why we maynt with an Hearty Love and Good-Will *canvass* one another's *Reasons*, and try their *Strength* : I can't see what need there is it should *break in upon our Tempers* on either side, for the Hearty *Friends* of this Ecclesiastical *Constitution* to bring the best *Grounds* they can to support it ; and the *Dissenters* from it modestly to shew upon what *Grounds* they refuse to fall in with it. Our Disagreeing in this, little affects the Publick, as long as we heartily Agree against the *Common Enemy*. And it is from comparing these *Reasons* together, that our Superiors will best be able to judge, whether a farther *Reformation* be not desirable and needful ; and Inferiors, whether *Complying* or *Dissenting* be their Duty. If our *Writings* in this *Controversie* herein give *Assistance*, I can't see that we have any *Reason* to repent our *Pains*.

The Length of this Debate cannot, I think, much surprize one that considers the Variety of Particulars insisted on. In my Three Books, I have *Answered* Five that have been written against me, together with some smaller Tracts. I would have been shorter, had I not feared it would have diserved the Cause I am *engaged* in. And tho' I wont say *nothing* shall prevail with me to write any more in this *Controversie*, yet I can venture to promise, that if any farther *Elucidations* appear Necessary, they shall not give much Offence by their *Tediousness*.

I have here finished the whole of what I undertook. Having in the Two former Volumes Defended our Fathers who were Silenced, as to the *Validity of their Orders*, and as to their Not complying with the Terms of *Ministerial Conformity* that were

were imposed upon them; I in the present Volume proceed to justify their holding on in their Ministry after they were Ejected by the Government; to Vindicate the Practise of the People who encourag'd them in the Exercise of their Ministry; and to Answer the Reflections of Mr. *Hoadly* on that *Occasional Conformity*, both of Ministers and People, by which they intended to express their Charity, towards a Church, which they were not satisfied in their Consciences entirely to fall in with.

I have also subjoin'd a Letter to Mr. *Ollyffe*, in Answer to his *Second Defence of Ministerial Conformity*; and another to Mr. *Hoadly*, by way of Animadversion on his *Defence of the Reasonableness of Conformity*, &c. and shall expect something that is new, before I shall engage any farther with either of them.

The

The Historical Letter in the Close may perhaps to some that are Curious be more Entertaining, than any thing else here offer'd to their view; and I think my self oblig'd to give some Account of it.

Hearing of some Ministers in and about *Lincolnshire*, who formerly had Livings in the Church of *England*, but are now *Nonconformists*; I was desirous to know how this should happen. Thereupon I wrote to Mr. *Rastrick*, (who is now the Worthy Pastor of a Considerable Congregation of *Dissenters* in the Town of *Kings Lynne* in *Norfolk*), desiring him to favour me with the History of his Treatment in the Church, and the Grounds of his quitting his Living. After some time I received from him the Entertaining Letter, which, with his Allowance, I here publish; recommending it to the Perusal both
of

of Mr. Ollyffe, and Mr. Hoadly. If I mistake not, it will be found to give some Light in several Matters which our Controversie runs upon. Tho' I cannot say I agree with him in every Particular, yet I can assure all whom it may concern, that I Publish it as I receiv'd it; and think it an Happiness that I have been an *Instrument* in helping the World to the sight of so instructive a Narrative as it contains; and that the rather, because such is the Temper of the Author, that it leads him very much to affect Retirement: So that had he not been urg'd to it, his Case would hardly ever have fallen under general Notice. I forbear the particular Remarks which such a Letter would naturally lead to, leaving it to every Reader to make them for himself.

I shall

I shall only add, that being now free to Prosecute my Design of a Second Edition of my *Abridgment*, with Emendations and Additions, I renew my Request to all that are Able to Rectifie *Mistakes* with reference to any of the Ejected *Ministers*, or to give a more distinct Character of them, that they would not fail to give me Notice. I would indeed willingly have staid for the Opposite Account, about which there hath been (as I am inform'd) such Consultation in many Parts of the Kingdom: I have that Respect for Truth, that I should be glad to be set right in the Particulars in which I have been mistaken, tho' the Pen should be dipp'd in Gall that gives me the *Information*: But not seeing any Likelihood, after all the *Boasts* that have been made, and all the *Instructions* that have been given to their Numerous Dispersed Agents and Correspondents, that their Design will in
hast

haſt be brought to the deſir'd Perfection, I now purpoſe to proceed as faſt as my Circumſtances will allow: And if neither *Good-will* nor *Ill-will* can prevail with ſuch as are Able, to give me *Information* beforehand, I appeal to all the World whether their Clamours afterwards will not be unjuſt, and groundleſs.

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THE
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A

D E F E N C E

O F

Moderate Non-Conformity.

P A R T III.

A Continuation of the Tenth Chapter of the *Abridgment*.

“ **S**O That hence forward the Church
“ doors were Shut upon them with Con-
“ tempt, and others filled their Vacant
“ Pulpits: And they were Left to spend
“ their time in Solitude and Retirement,
“ preparing themselves for another World, as
“ being of no farther use in this. They were
“ much perswaded to lay down their Ministry,
“ when they were deny'd the Liberty of Exer-
“ cising it publickly; but the Generality of them,
“ could not be satisfy'd upon many Accounts.
“ They fear'd the Guilt of Perfidious-breaking
“ their *Ordination Vow*, by which they obliged
“ themselves to the Diligent Performance of
“ their Ministry. They were afraid of the Sin
“ of *Sacrilege* in alienating Persons, who were
“ Consecrated to God. It had to them a very
“ strange Appearance, that their Brethren should
“ so much aggravate the *Sacrilege* of alienating

*Reasons of
the Eject-
ed Mini-
sters, for
continuing
in the Mi-
nistry:*

“ consecrated Utensils and Lands, when they at
 “ the same time were so forward to alienate con-
 “ secrated Persons, and discover’d such an Ap-
 “ probation of it ; When as in their Apprehen-
 “ sion, the Lands and Goods were but to serve
 “ the Persons, who were Employ’d in the Divine
 “ Service. Many of their People claim’d the
 “ Continuance of their Relation and Ministry,
 “ and having given up themselves to their Con-
 “ duct in Divine things, beg’d they would not
 “ desert them: They profess’d they could not
 “ trust their Souls to the Pastoral Guidance and
 “ Care, of a Great many of those, who were plac’d
 “ in the Churches in their stead ; and declar’d,
 “ that if they should forsake them, they would
 “ charge them with neglect of their Souls, whose
 “ Care they had undertaken. So that they fear’d
 “ the Sin of Unfaithfulness, Cruelty and Un-
 “ mercifulness, and incurring the Guilt of ruin-
 “ ing Souls, by stopping their own Mouths.
 “ The Magistrates Authority was indeed against
 “ them ; but they found themselves under a
 “ Solemn Obligation to an higher Authority to
 “ fulfil their Ministry as they were able, when
 “ sought to for help ; for neglecting which they
 “ could not discern how the Command of the
 “ Magistrate could furnish them with a just Ex-
 “ cuse. Should they have been commanded to
 “ forbear feeding their Children, or relieving
 “ the poor and distress’d, they should have fear’d
 “ being charg’d with murdering them, if they
 “ dy’d through their Neglect : And in like
 “ manner they were apprehensive of their being
 “ chargeable with the Consequences of a Neglect-
 “ ing to promote the Good of Souls in a Mi-
 “ nisterial Way, should any Perish and be Lost,
 “ whom they were able to have assisted and
 “ instructed. The Curse and Doom of the

“ unprofitable Servant that hid his Talent, *Matth.*
 “ 25. much affected them; and they could not
 “ bear the Thoughts of exposing themselves to
 “ a like Treatment. Withal, they found the
 “ Necessities of the People in most Parts of the
 “ Nation Great, notwithstanding the Legal Pro-
 “ vision for them; many Ministers in the Pub-
 “ lick Churches having more Souls to look after
 “ than several would be sufficient for: and at
 “ the same time, without being at all Cenfori-
 “ ous, it was too Evident to them, that sundry
 “ of them were insufficient and unqualify’d. And
 “ making the best of things, they found that
 “ Populous Cities, and the ignorant Parts of the
 “ Country needed more help, than the Parish
 “ Ministers did, or could afford them. They
 “ were withal affected with many Passages of
 “ Sacred Scripture; some of which intimate the
 “ Duration of the Ministerial Office, where there
 “ is once a Conveyance: As *Matth.* 5. 13, 14. &c.
 “ *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. *Ephes.* 4. 10. &c. *1 Tim.* 4. 15,
 “ 16. *Matt.* 24. 45, 46, 48. And others of them
 “ plead for the Necessity of Preaching, even
 “ when the Magistrate forbids: As *Acts* 4. 19.
 “ 5. 28. *1 Cor.* 9. 14, 16. *Acts* 4. 29. *2 Tim.* 4.
 “ 1, 2. *1 Tim.* 6. 13, 14. &c. And they found
 “ it was their Duty to pray for the sending in
 “ of Faithful Labourers, *Matth.* 9. 38. *Luke* 10. 2.
 “ And could not but think the sending up of such
 “ a Request to God, a mocking of him, while such
 “ as they were, ceas’d to Labour, who had been
 “ Call’d and Qualify’d, Own’d and Succeeded.
 “ In short, Maturely weighing the whole Mat-
 “ ter, they after the Narrowest Search, appre-
 “ hended it an indispensable Duty lying upon
 “ them, as Men and Ministers, by the Obliga-
 “ tion of God’s Law of Charity, and by the
 “ binding Force of their own Vows at their

“ Self-Dedication to the Service of God in his
 “ House, to do their Best in the exercise of all
 “ their Talents, Human, Christian and Ministe-
 “ rial, to seek to save Peoples Souls ; and there-
 “ fore to Preach or Teach and Exhort them, in the
 “ manner that appear’d to them most conducive
 “ thereunto. They could not see whence, either
 “ Civil Magistrates or Bishops had any power
 “ to Doom them to utter Silence, so long as
 “ they could not prove upon them, either Apo-
 “ stacy, Heresie, or Perfidiousness, or any thing in-
 “ consistent with the Publick Peace. And there-
 “ fore, persisting in that Work, which God and
 “ the Necessities of Souls call’d them to, they
 “ tho’t Patience their Duty, as to all Sufferings
 “ they might meet with : In which respect
 “ they endeavour’d to arm themselves as strong-
 “ ly as was possible. *

* Baxter’s
 Noncon-
 formity
 stated and
 argu’d, p.

156. *His Plea for Peace*, p. 229. *His Apology for the Nonconfor-*
mist Ministers, in Quarto: *Where the whole Letter is distinctly*
Canvas’d. *His Sacrilegious Desertion of the Holy Ministry Re-*
buk’d, Octavo. *And Allen’s Call to Archippus*, Quarto.

Part. 2. Mr. Hoadly here tells us, he will suppose the Rea-
 p. 3. sons alledg’d to be sufficient to prove, that a Compli-
 cance with the Terms of Ministerial Conformity
 had been Sinful in our Ministers, and yet he under-
 takes to prove, that the Arguments propos’d are not
 p. 4. Sufficient to justify their Behaviour. And he says,
 he’ll Consider these Arguments, both in the Case
 of those, who continued their Ministry after they
 were Ejected by the *Act for Uniformity*; and also
 in the Case of those, who have been Ordained to the
 Ministry since. My Profess’d Aim, was to give the
 Reasons of our Fathers for Continuing in the
 Ministry after the Law silenc’d them: And
 yet Seeing, he is so willing to Consider the Case
 of their Successors too, I shan’t be backward to fol-
 low

low him, tho' I have touch'd upon it already in the First Part of my Defence. But here he tells me, *He'l pass by whatever is not Argument; undue Aggravations; which are rather Prejudices to support a Party, than Arguments to maintain a Cause, which ought to be founded on Reason, and not on Passion.* I profess he's free to take his own way: But then I hope he'l yield this is as allowable on our Side, as on his: Upon which Condition I agree.

p. 5.

Before he proceeds to Particulars, he takes care to lay in one General Prejudice; viz: *That several who were in the Ministry before 1662, And those none of the most inconsiderable nor injudicious, were not determin'd by these Arguments. Being shut out of the Establishment, they sought out some other ways of being useful to Mankind; tho' if these Arguments prove Good, Mr. Hoadly says, he would not be in their Case for a thousand Worlds.* I won't say this is an *Aggravation* and not an *Argument*; but shall desire Mr. H. to Consider a few things. Of those who were Preachers in 1662, and silenc'd by the Uniformity Act, and afterwards turn'd off to other Employments, many were not Ordain'd, and so not Strictly oblig'd. This was the Case of Dr. Sampson Dr. Morton and Dr. Hulse, &c. and indeed of Most of those who turn'd either to Physick or the Law, or other secular Business. They were but Candidats for the Ministry before; and therefore were free to Divert from it, when they were deny'd the Liberty of Officiating in it with full Satisfaction to their Consciences. But among those who were Ordain'd Ministers before, there were very few that were Ejected, that wholly laid aside the Ministry; and in the case of those few, Great allowance must be made for Fear, as Circumstances then stood; and the influence of the Glosses put upon things by those

p. 9.

who rather desir'd they should quit the Ministry than continue in it. The Arguments alledg'd, may in themselves be very considerable, and yet might not be rightly understood by these few; who had they seen things in the same light, would have acted in the same manner as the rest of their Brethren: So that tho' Mr. *Hoadly* were in their Case, he might be very safe; and yet the Considerations mention'd may be very weighty.

He then comes to the Pleas of those who held on in their Ministry: the first of which was taken from their *Ordination-Vow*, wherein they oblig'd themselves to the diligent Performance of their Ministry. Mr. *H.* says, *That he knows not what it was that they explicitly promis'd, when they Devoted themselves to the Service of God in the Ministry; which I a little wonder at. For some of them were Ordain'd by Bishops before the Civil Wars; with whose Ordination-Promise he must therefore be as well acquainted as with his own. And as for the rest, they were Ordain'd according to the Directory, where he may see their Promise in Form. But he says, He is sure, Nothing ought to be imply'd in such a Vow, and such a Dedication, that is contrary to the Service of that God, to whom they Dedicated themselves, or inconsistent with the Good of the Christian Church, in which they oblig'd themselves by Vow to Minister. To which I reply, that when Persons that are duly qualify'd, Devote themselves to the Service of God, in the Work of the Ministry, 'tis necessarily imply'd (whether it be exprest or no) that they engage to make that the Business of their Lives. And when they are once thus engag'd, tho' a change of Circumstances may occasion a Variation in the manner of their exercising their Ministry, yet I conceive no change of Circumstances can make their continuing in the Ministry,*

Part III. Moderate Non-Conformity

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stry, as far as they have a Natural and Moral Capacity, and a real Opportunity, cease to be their Duty. Nor can I see how their acting in this Sacred Office, according to the Rule of the Word, can ever be contrary to the Service of God, or really inconsistent with the Good of the Christian Church. His Explication of this Matter is a little Particular. *The Vow, says he, was, to promote the Glory of God, and Good of that Society to which you belong, and you had not determin'd your selves to one certain way, unless in order to these Ends.* This is not a sufficient Account of the Ordination Vow, which is really a Solemn Engagement to make the Ministry the Business of the Life; and to Officiate in it as God gives Capacity, Ability and Opportunity. Now (says he) *if these Ends may be better promoted by you in forsaking this way, than in continuing in it, you are neither Perfidious nor Sacrilegious, if you desert it; but rather if you continue in it.* To break such a Vow as that fore-mention'd, and desert the Sacred Ministry, because Men (who could not prove themselves divinely authoriz'd for any such purpose) forbid them to continue in it, was what our Fathers tho't both *Perfidious* and *Sacrilegious*; and, I think, very justly. And to pretend, that so doing would be for the *Glory of God, and the Good of the Church,* while their Ministerial Capacity continu'd, is so far from an Excuse, that it rather makes the Matter worse. *But (says he) He is not Perfidious, who acts against the literal sense of his Vow, because it is agreeable to the first and original Design of it, that he should do so.* I answer; He that being duly qualify'd for Service in the Ministry, and solemnly engaging to spend his Days in that Service; shall afterwards wholly divert to other Affairs; without minding that Service; is justly chargeable with *Perfidiousness*; because he acts against both

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the literal Sense, and the original Design of his Ordination Vow. This we may safely assert in the general; tho' in particular Cases, where there may be some peculiar Circumstances, it is fittest for us to leave Persons to God. He adds, *Nor is he Sacrilegious who withdraws from the Sacred Office, to which he had dedicated himself, because he can now no longer do that Service to the Church, he once propos'd to himself, in this Station; but can do much more, by betaking himself to another.* To which I reply, for Persons duly qualified for Service in the Sacred Ministry, and bound to it by a Solemn Promise at their Ordination; for Persons, whom God has own'd in that Office, and may be likely further to own as Instruments of Good to many, if they continue faithfully to discharge their Duty, for such Persons having an Opportunity, to *withdraw wholly from the Sacred Office, is properly Sacrilegious:* And to do this upon pretence of being no longer capable of Service to the Church, is a poor Excuse; for which in the Case of such, there can be no solid reason given. For the Church always needs the Assistance of such Persons. And to talk of their *doing mischief*, while they, according to the Rule of the Word, discharge the Office, is to suppose it a mischievous thing to help multitudes of Souls to Heaven, because it is not done in Mood and Figure.

Mr. Hoadly frankly declares, *That it shocks him to think that any Person knowingly and willingly design'd to rob the Church of the Labours of any truly good and useful Men.* He may suppose therefore, that they did not apprehend those concern'd were *truly good and useful Men*, if that will afford him any Relief. But that alters not the Reality of the Case. I own with him, *That the Faults of others are neither our Faults, nor excuses*

causes for our Faults. And, for that reason, if some were faulty in attempting to Silence so many Hundred useful Ministers, as were Ejected by the Act of Uniformity, tho' I don't think that will be charg'd upon those, who neither had any Hand in that matter, nor approv'd of it, and pleaded for it afterwards; so neither would it have been an Excuse for those Ministers, had they comply'd with them. But why should he say, *That this is of no relation to the Point now before us?* If it be evident, that they who design'd wholly to silence our Fathers, did design *to rob the Church, of the Labours of many truly good and useful Men,* (and, if I mistake not, Mr. Hoadly himself afterwards owns something that is very like it); then I think it plainly follows, that they could not concur in silencing themselves, without having also a hand in such a Robbery upon the Church.

But, says Mr. Hoadly— the Ordination Vow is *no Argument, as it stands by it self, for the Continuance of their Ministry.* He might therefore have taken notice (had he tho't fit) that it was not pleaded alone, but in Conjunction with other Considerations. And yet taken alone, I can't see, but it may be allow'd of weight in the Case of all, who knew themselves qualified according to the Gospel Rule; and had found God owning them in their Ministrations. A Humane Prohibition could not dispense with their Vow, so as to excuse their Quitting the Sacred Office, so solemnly undertaken. But says he, *the right way must be, first to shew from other Arguments, that it is for the Honour and Service of God and his Church, that they should publicly execute the Office of Ministers, and then to argue from their Vow, to the Continuance of their Publick Ministrations.* For my Part I took the Arguments, which they Pleaded in their own Vindication, in the Order in which

which they propos'd them. And supposing their Considerations were not rank'd according to the Nice Rules of Method, I should yet suppose, that as the World ordinarily goes, it might easily be overlookt. But if the Gentleman will stand upon it, I doubt he'd be hard put to't to prove, that their Method was not as good, as that which he would have prescribed them. His main Plea is, *That their Vow was wholly conditional; and respecting the Good and Service of the Church: Supposing it; if yet this is a Condition that is never wanting in the Case of such as are duly qualified, both as to their Intellectuals and Morals, for Ministerial Service; if the continu'd Labours of such Persons is ever for the Good and Service of the Church, then are we but where we were. The most that can be made of the Matter, is this. They took it for granted, that the Labours of all Faithful Ministers, according to the Rule of the Word, were always for the Good and Service of the Church; and this being supposed, their Argument from their Ordination-Vow is firm and strong. Mr. Hoadly, when he comes to Answer them, will suppose that the Labours of Faithful Ministers, tho' according to the Rules of the Word, may be to the dishonour of God, and disservice of the Church; and therefore pretends their Argument from their Ordination Vow won't hold: But he should have disprov'd their Supposition, and clear'd his own; before he could reasonably expect, either to weaken their Argument, or serve his Cause against them.*

It was further pleaded by the Ministers who were Ejected, *That many of their People claim'd the Continuance of their Relation and Ministry, &c. and that they fear'd the Sin of Unfaithfulness, Cruelty and Unmercifulness, and incurring the Guilt of ruining Souls, by stopping their own Mouths.* To which

Mr. H.

Mr. *H.* thus replies, *I do not doubt indeed, but that many of their People might be induc'd by their own Affections to them, and many by their Discourse with them, to request them still to Minister to them. But how does it follow from thence, that therefore they ought?*

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I Answer: I have so good an Opinion of Mr. *H.* as to believe that if he had been in the Case of some of these Ejected Ministers, he would himself scarce have demurr'd upon the Point. I'll suppose him to have undertaken the Care of the Souls of the People in such a certain Parish and that God had own'd him there, to do good to many, and spread serious Religion among them. I'll suppose him silenc'd by Authority, upon the Account of his Non-compliance with some things requir'd, in which his Conscience after his utmost Enquiries remain'd dissatisfied. I'll farther suppose his Place to remain for some time unsupply'd, and that if he continues not his Ministry among them, they must have no Ordinances in this time Administred to them, no Publick Worship kept up among them: (I may well put such a Case as this, since I have been particularly inform'd by some of the Ejected Ministers, that this was their Case; and I refer to Mr. *Quick*, who is yet Living for one:) I'll once more suppose, that he is in this Case set upon by these poor People, to whom he was related as a Pastor, and entreated and adjur'd by all that is sacred, that if he has any value for their Souls, any regard to their Eternal Welfare; any Concern not to undo all that he has been doing, since he has been spending his Pains amongst them, he would still continue to Minister to them in Holy things as before: Would Mr. *H.* in such a Case question whether he ought or no? I must needs say, I both hope and believe, he wo'd soon determine to gratify their desire. When then he asks, *are the People fit Judges of Your Duty*

Duty or Directors of your Practice? I answer it does not follow, our Fathers tho't they were so in all Cases because they tho't themselves bound to regard them in such a Case as this. But he goes on with his Querys: *Have you Acted, or do you Act, as if you were guided by this Consideration; as if it were your Judgment, that you Contracted such a Relation to the Flock, in which you once Minister, that a removal becomes unlawful, if any of them request your stay?* But is this Argument or Aggravation? He knows very well that this Judgment did not obtain among the Generality of the Ejected Ministers, Nor was it necessary, that it should, in order to their being consistent with themselves. For it does not follow that a Minister must think himself necessarily stak'd down for life, in that Congregation to which he is once related as a Pastor; because he, tho' prohibited by Authority thinks himself oblig'd to continue his Labours among a People that God has made him useful to, and to regard their Crys and Entreatys on that behalf, as long as they are either wholly destitute of a Minister, or have one sent to Officiate among them, who is notoriously unfit for that Sacred Work. When he farther asks, *Did you never remove from these People who thus Entreated you?* The Answer is Easy; Most of them did it not till force Constraind them. They preached among them till they were many of them imprison'd, and some of them banish'd and afterwards by violence seperated from them by the *Oxford Act*. And what tho' they afterwards remov'd from one Congregation to another? Why might they not, if in the Places where they were, their Familys could not subsist; or they had a Prospect of greater Usefulness and service elsewhere: Or suppose *the People are not always content to part with their Ministers when they would have them;* Does it follow they must do it, when others

others wou'd have them, tho' without and against Reason? Does it follow that the silenc'd Ministers were obliged to leave their Flocks, when they earnestly Entreated their stay, and were like so Considerably to suffer by their removal, as may well be suppos'd, in Case they had no Ministers among them in their room; or only such as were loose and Scandalous? He further asks *is this Argument only good, when you are succeeded by a Minister of the Establish'd Church, and not when you are succeeded by one amongst your selves?* I answer 'tis as Good, if an unqualify'd Person succeeds, with whom the People have therefore just reason to be dissatisfy'd, in one Case as in another. For the different Character of the successor, and his Profession, if he be really known to be immoral and Vicious, makes no difference in the Obligation of Ministers (when desired) to take Care of the Flocks, to which they have been related as Pastors. And as much as the People are despis'd, we find they often are so far *Discerners*, as to be able to distinguish between such as aim at doing Good to Souls by their Preaching, and such as only aim at a Livelyhood; between such as discover they are in Earnest in their Pulpit-Performances, by the suitableness of their Lives, and such as live-down what they Preach. And tho' it is not to be deny'd, but that the Ejected Ministers (and their Successors too) have *had reason to complain sometimes of their want of Judgment*, yet it does not therefore follow, but that when the People would either have been left wholly destitute upon their removal, or under the Conduct of unsafe and insufficient Guides, those Ministers whom the Law silenc'd, might not in such a case, warrantably have regard to their intreaties. When he further asks, whether the People *made this request only, where their Successors were really insufficient*

sufficient? and whether it was regarded by these Ejected Ministers *only in such Cases*? I answer, 'tis eno' to the Purpose, if this Argument is Good in some Cases, which was not pleaded in the Case of all: And tho' it did not hold in all, yet it does not therefore follow, but it stands very good, and is unanswerable in the Case of some. And indeed, if some of these Arguments will hold in the Case of some, and others in the Case of others, and there were none among the Ejected Ministers but might be justified by some of them; it is eno'; it answers the End intended, tho' there are several of them that suit not such and such Particular Cases. And after all, if Mr. *Hoadly* wonders to see such insignificant Arguments advanc'd for so very material a Point of Practice, I cannot help it: He must give me leave also to wonder in my turn, to see such insignificant Querys put, in a Matter so Momentous, depending upon Circumstances, not distinctly weigh'd or stated.

As for his Formal Speech which he has taken the Pains to compose for one of these Ejected Ministers to his Parishioners, when they perswaded him to continue his Labours amongst them after the Law had silenc'd him, I have these Material Objections against it: That it, in sundry respects, suited not the Case of those who were most vehemently urg'd by their People to continue their Ministerial Labours amongst them; and, that in other respects, I hardly think Mr. *Hoadly* himself could have made such a Speech with a safe Conscience.

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1. A Set Speech of this nature would not, in several respects, have suited the Case of those among the Ejected Ministers, who were most urg'd by their People to continue their Labours among them. They that had none to succeed them upon their Ejection, (which was the Case of several)

veral) could not have told their People, that it was for the universal good of the Church, that they should not execute their Office publicly among them: Or that there was no necessity for it; or that there was no Danger of their losing their Souls, for want of their publick Assistance; when they might so easily drop into Eternity in an unprepared State, having none to assist them, if they refus'd. They could not tell them, that in the Church of England there was (as to them) Excellent Provision for their Edification &c. since she left them destitute, &c. Again, They that had such successors as were notoriously scandalous, and immoral in their Lives, could not have told their People, (even tho' this Directory of Mr. Hoadly's had then been extant) that they tho't themselves not oblig'd to Continue their Labours publicly amongst them, when they that way might see an Apparent Hazard of losing much of the Fruit of their past-Labours. They could not tell them, that in the Church of England there was (as to them) Excellent Provision for their Edification, and increase in all truly Christian Graces; when they had one sent among them for a Guide, who rather ridicul'd serious Religion than recommended it; and was more likely to lead them to Hell by his Vicious Example, than to Heaven by his Instructions and Ministrations. They could not tell them, that they needed not to doubt, but that under such a Successor they might make considerable Proficiency in the paths of the Gospel: For they discern'd just reason to fear the Contrary. They could not tell them, their Salvation would not be much endanger'd in such a Case: For they knew 'twas otherwise, notwithstanding the Liturgy and Publick Service, which they saw no reason to magnify and extol at the Rate, Mr. Hoadly seems willing they should have done. In these Respects, this is but an ill-fram'd Speech. (2) As

(2.) As forward as Mr. *Hoadly* is herein to declare himself, I hardly think he could have made such a Speech with a safe Conscience : For supposing he had endeavour'd to have led the People of such a Parish, while he had been among them, in the way to Heaven, both by his Doctrine and Example ; I don't see, if the Successor that was appointed him, had been a Licentious Person, a Man (visibly) of no Conscience, how he could have told them, that it was for the *universal Good of the Church*, that he should not publickly execute his Office among them ; or, that it was for their Good in Particular, which must come under the *Universal Good*. As high an Opinion as his Speech discovers of the *Liturgy*, &c. I hardly think he would have told them in such a Case, That they were to regard the *Peace of the Church* as well as their own *Humours and Fancies* : For I can't have so bad an Opinion of him, as to imagine, that he could have found in his heart to have represented the preferring his own Ministerial Labours, calculated to promote Serious Religion, and back'd with a good Life, before the trifling of one, whose whole Deportment discover'd no Concern or Value for Religion, as a *Humour and Fancy*. So that this Speech, which he hath *presum'd* (as he says) to make for the Ejected Ministers in this Case, answers no End that I can discern (except to discover his Value for the *Liturgy*) and therefore might very well have been spared, he having given such abundant evidence of that elsewhere.

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His next Complaint is, that the *Authority of the Magistrate* is spoken of, as if it were the only Argument to engage the Ejected Ministers to Silence, &c. where he frankly declares, that he urges not the bare *Authority of any Earthly Power*. Owing, that

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he has but a mean Opinion of the Argument drawn from

from thence, in the *Question now before us*. It must be own'd this was the Argument with which the Ejected Ministers were most vigorously oppos'd. Whether he has not betray'd the Cause in giving this up, I leave him to Consider. If the Magistrate had not interpos'd with his Authority, I am apt to think, the Silenc'd Ministers would have been able eno' to Cope with any Church Power that Confronted them. But for him when this is drop't, to repeat again his insinuation, that it would have been *more for the honour of God and the good of the Christian World*, that the Ejected Ministers should not have Continu'd the Publick Exercise of their Ministry; and to expect that this will be regarded when he has not prov'd it; is to lay aside a formidable Weapon, and venture to fight with a Bulrush in his Hands.

The next signification of his Displeasure, is thus express'd. He says, that *the Aggravating this part of the Cause, with Comparing the neglect of the Demands of the People, for these Ejected Ministers to continue amongst them, with the neglecting to feed their Children, or relieve the Poor and distressed, shews only how willing they are to say what may move the Affections of the World about them, not what may Convince the Judgments of Men of Tho't and Consideration.* Could I see reason for this Censure, for my Part, I should lay as little stress upon this representation, as Mr. H. himself can desire. For I am none of those, that are for working upon the Affections, and leaving the Judgment behind. But with his good leave, I think this Illustration may convince the Judgment of such as will duly Consider it. For tho'

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it would not be *Inhuman and Barbarous* for Parents to neglect to feed their children when they're otherwise well provided for, yet there's scarce any Man but will judge it to be highly *inhumane and barbarous* in these respects to neglect them, either while they have none to feed them, or when they are in

the Hands of such as would not mind to give them what is necessary and fitting. And tho' a Mans *relieving* these and these Poor People, is not so necessary, when *there is no danger of their starving for want of his relief*; yet to sit still and see People starving that have none to relieve them; or not to regard their Distress, tho' those that pretend to take care of them, rather ruin than relieve them, is what I think any Considerate Person will agree is against all the Laws of Charity. And supposing it should be true, that those who profess'd in Sacred Matters, to Act upon this Principle, should in some cases have Acted contrary to it; it does not therefore follow that the Principle is not Good. Suppose they who stay'd with their former People, when the Law Ejected them, should have afterwards, some of them, remov'd from them upon Reasons that were not justifiable; it does not therefore follow, that their continuing their Labours among them, while they either were not provided for; or while they were ill provided for, was not warrantable. When then he addresses himself to the Ejected Ministers and says, *I doubt not but that you may have remov'd (at least that you Esteem'd it not unlawful so to do) from these very People, who so Importunately demanded your stay amongst them, to exercise your Publick Ministry in some other Congregation, and Contract a new Relation to another People; This agreed and yielded: And what of all this? why says he, by this Removal you are Ejected and Silenc'd as far as they are Concern'd. And if so, where is the force of this Argument, on which so great weight seems to be laid? As if, they might never leave them, because they could not conceive they should have done well to leave them wholly destitute, having none to take care of them; or as if they might as well neglect a continu'd Call to Service among*

mong them, when they had none elsewhere; as they might leave them well provided for, when the Providence of God gave 'em an Opportunity of greater Service in another Place: Or as if their leaving them had been as warrantable while they knew not but the Magistrate might upon Reflection yield to mild Councils, as after the falling under Legal Severities, which repeated, would have utterly ruin'd them, and their Familys. I should think these things speak for thmselves. Let Mr. *Hoadly* then banter this Argument as freely as he pleases, I must needs say, I think it firm and strong in the Case of several of the Ejected Ministers. I won't indeed say, that because their People would charge them with neglect of their Souls, *unless they continued Publickly to Minister among them, it was therefore their Duty, to Minister in whatever other Places they tho't fit throughout the whole Nation:* (Had I thus represented an Argument on his side, he'd have warmly exclaim'd,) But this I'll venture to say; that tho' the Law silenc'd them, the Entreatys of their People to continue their Labours for the good of their Souls, while they were either destitute, or ill provided for, might justify their so doing. And Gods owning them in these Labours under the frowns of the Government, to promote serious Religion, might very justly encourage them, to persist in the Great Work they had undertaken; and when their Hardships and Sufferings drove them from one Place, they might still warrantably pursue the same Work in another, where the Providence of God gave them a Call and Opportunity. And tho' Mr. *H.* is pleas'd to say, that *this Argument will excuse so very few, that it was hardly worth the while to mention it,* yet he must give those who are better Acquainted with the Case of the Ejected Mini-

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sters than himself, leave to judge that it reaches to many more than he seems to be aware of.

His Last Suggestion upon this Head is this, that had any Souls perisht, in this Case, the fault had not been in the Silenc'd Ministers, but it had been *Chargeable on their own Neglect*. But this will not hold, while these Ministers had a Call and an Opportunity of Assisting them. For tho' every Man is in the first place charg'd with the Care of his own Soul; yet if others whose proper work and business it is to give Assistance, should refuse when call'd upon, the sad Consequences would lie at their Doors; and that particularly, where there is a special Obligation, to give such Assistance; which many of the silenc'd Ministers apprehended was their Case, with reference to those to whom they before stood in a Pastoral Relation.

P. 24. It was further Added in the Case of these silenc'd Ministers, *that the Curse and Doom of the unprofitable servant that hid his Talent, Mat. 25. much Affected them, and they could not bear the tho'ts of exposing themselves to a like Treatment.* Mr. Hoadly replies, that they might have been *very Profitable Servants* had they Conform'd; but denys they had been chargeable as *unprofitable servants* had they laid down the Publick Exercise of that Office, when they could not join with the *Establisht Church*. And he gives this reason for it; *because by doing so, they would have consulted the Peace of the Church, and the Honour of God, without putting themselves out of all Capacity of doing Service to the Souls of Men.* But this deserves to be Reconsider'd. For if these Ministers might have been *very Useful and Profitable in the Ministry*, in the Church, if they had Conform'd, it must be because they were well Qualify'd for Service in that Respect. Here's he Talent to be improv'd

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improv'd. Now says Mr. *Hoadly*, by remaining silent, you'd have *consulted the Peace of the Church*, &c. We'll suppose it: But what becomes of the *Talent* in the mean time? that *Ministerial Talent* that was given by God? This remains *unoccupy'd*, and hid; bury'd and lost. This makes those concern'd, *Unprofitable Servants*, in the truest Sense: For their proper Talent lies un-employ'd. Besides; what Comparison is there room for, between the Good that would result from the faithful Management of the Talent entrusted, and the Good suppos'd to follow if they left it unoccupy'd? In the former Case, the helping many Souls in the way to Heaven would have been the Consequence; in the Latter, the Peace of the Church only is consulted: Now is it supposable, that the real Good of Souls, and the Peace of the Church, should stand in Competition with wise Men, and they be at a Loss, which should outweigh? Is there any Comparison, between the helping many Souls to Heaven; and that Agreement in Forms and Ceremonies, that was in this Case obtruded under the Notion of the *Peace of the Church*? Besides, the Ejected Ministers, manifested a much greater regard to the true *Peace of the Church* than those that silenc'd them. They pray'd and begg'd for it; they offer'd to submit in order to it, as far as they could, without dishonouring God, and doing Violence to their own Consciences, but all in vain: Any Man that reads their *Petition for Peace*, presented to the Bishops in 1661, will find they were not backward to consult the Peace of the Church. When after all this, they who had the Ascendant, would force them to comply with their Wills and Humours in things which they call indifferent, where when press'd and urg'd they could not prove their Authority to impose, they were the break-

ers of the Peace of the Church: And the Ministers who were passive, might well eno' apprehend, that had they comply'd, or had they been altogether silent, they had been so far from consulting the Peace of the Church, that they had encourag'd *Church-Tyranny*, and Imposition; which when once given way to, is hardly capable of any Bounds: None can tell where 'twill stop. They could not see how this would be for *the Honour of God*, as is pretended. And tho' 'tis said, that they *would not*, had they altogether ceas'd from Ministring publickly, *have put themselves out of all Capacity of doing Service to the Souls of Men*; yet it will deserve to be consider'd, that that little Service they had been capable of had they silenc'd themselves, had been far from an *improving their Talent*: It had been a real letting it lie *unoccupy'd*, if compar'd with the Service of which they were capable, continuing the Exercise of their Ministry, both in Publick and Private. Mr. *H.* has indeed mention'd several ways of Service, had their Publick Ministry ceas'd; but they neither were so considerable as he would seem inclinable to have them believ'd; nor were they at all comparable with what they might expect upon continuing of their Ministry as before. He says, *their Examples might still have continued to shine before Men, as much as ever; their Conversation might have been instructive, and of great Influence upon their Neighbours*: Be it so; yet what would this have been to their *Ministerial Talent*, for which they were Accountable to God? That, upon this Supposition had remain'd *Unoccupy'd*. And withal, neither could their Examples have been so influential for Good, had they appear'd so afraid of Men, as to cease from their Ministry, when there was such need of their Labours; and when so many that needed them,

were

were so earnest for them. He goes on: *Their Writings might have pleaded the Cause of true and serious Religion in the World.* Suppose they might have been this way useful, yet it does not follow that this had been a sufficient Improvement of their Talent, which is the Thing under Consideration: Though withal, care was taken soon after their Ejection, to clap such a Padlock upon the Press, that their Writings could not reach the World, to do Good, without the utmost Difficulty; and without running considerable Hazards. So that in this Case there was poor Encouragement. 'Tis added, *Their Conformity as Laymen to the Church of England would have given a Check to the Spirit of violent Separation then reigning;* and on the other side, it should not be forgotten, it would also have given mighty Encouragement to that Spirit of Imposition, that was so rampant: *Would have done much to the producing Peace and Harmony in the Tempers of Men, viz. By inuring them to Ecclesiastical Servitude, which would produce Harmony in the Church, much after the same rate as Slavery would do it in the Commonwealth. Would have reflected no dishonour upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ, nor consequently upon their own Characters, as they were Christians;* unless (it should have been added) it could be suppos'd for the Honour of the Gospel, or becoming Christians, to prefer indifferent Forms and Ceremonies, before the saving of Mens Souls, by the Ministerial Endeavours of such as God had call'd to, qualified for, and own'd in that Service in his Church. And now says Mr. Hoadly; there being still room for this great Service, *what danger there could be of their incurring the Guilt and Doom of the Unprofitable Servant in the Gospel, I cannot see.* Perhaps he don't desire to see it; and then it is not likely

he should. But let us a little debate the matter, that he may yet see it if he pleases. *That Wicked and Sloathful Servant* (says he) acted his Part upon a quite different Principle. This is more than I can discern. His Principle I think was *Sloth and Slavish Fear*. He was Slothful, and would be at no Pains to improve his Talent: And he he was afraid his Master would lay more stress upon Circumstances, and little Particularities than there was any Ground for, and therefore he would do nothing of what was expected from him, in Proportion to the Ability given him. Now our Fathers thought their Case thus far Parallel: That had they ceas'd from their Ministry, they should be chargeable with *Sloth*, in not being at any suitable Pains to improve their Ministerial Talent: And with a *slavish Fear* also; as if the Master they serv'd, was so imperious and rigorous, as to lay more stress upon Niceties and Formalities, than upon the saving of Souls, under their Ministry. Herein there would have been a great Agreement. But says Mr. H. He consulted not the Honour of God, regarded not the Improvement of those Abilities and Opportunities he had of doing Good, but determined to live Idle and Useless in the World. That he liv'd altogether Idle and Useless, is more than the Parable expresses; and therefore the Stress ought not to be laid there: But he made no Improvement of the Talent that was committed to him, which he might have us'd to the Honour of the Donor, and the Good of many of his Fellow-Servants. 'Twas in that his Fault properly lay; and for that he is stil'd a wicked and slothful, and unprofitable Servant. And herein there would have been a great Agreement in the Case of our Fathers, had they wholly ceas'd from their Ministry. Their Valuable Ministerial Talent, which was design'd for
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the good of many Souls, would have remain'd unoccupy'd, and others have had no Benefit ; that is, none in comparison of what might have been expected, upon Supposition they continued in their Office, and were Faithful and Diligent in it. And to pretend the *Honour of God*, and *the Good of the Church*, and *respect to their Lord and Master* in such a Case, would really have been no better than trifling. It had been just as if the Servant in the Parable had told his Lord, that he had bury'd his Talent it is true, and made no Use of it, but that this was *out of regard to his Honour, and for the Common Good*, that there might not appear any clashing between him and his Fellow-Servants : For that he could not have manag'd and improv'd it to any Advantage, but they would presently have fallen foul upon him, unless he had just manag'd himself in their way, which to do he was not satisfied ; as not knowing what Right they had to impose upon him, nor that he could honestly comply ; &c. The Gentleman's arguing with the Ejected Ministers upon this Head, furnishes the slothful Servant with much such an Answer.

But he will make it a matter of Doubt, *whether* p. 26, 27.
(all Circumstances consider'd) the Silence of the Ejected Ministers would have been more for the Honour of God, or their continuing their Publick Ministrations. This he says, the thing turns upon ; this is a weighty Matter, and worthy of serious Consideration, whether the Arguments on the side of their Practice be plainly and evidently superiour to those on the other side : That they are so, (says he) I hardly believe I shall ever see clearly demonstrated. And till I do (says he) I cannot possibly think this Argument is sufficient to Vindicate the Continuance of their Publick Ministrations. This appears to me much the same as if he should doubt whether it were not better
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for the Servant in the Parable, (upon the Supposition forementioned) to leave his Talent unoccupy'd, than endeavour to improve it in his own way, and as he could: Whether (all Circumstances consider'd) his forbearance in such a Case, where there would be frequent Jarrings and Clashes between him and his Fellow-Servants, were not more for his Master's Honour, than his Diligence and Activity? What would he think of one that should say, that it was *a weighty matter, and worthy of a most serious Consideration, whether the Arguments on the side of this Servant's Diligence and Activity, be plainly and evidently superior to those on the other side?* Would this pass with him for a Convincing way of Arguing? I leave him to his second Thoughts: But hope he will give us leave to have the same Apprehensions of his Reasoning under this Head, as he would have in the other Case.

And after all, when Mr. *Hoadly* had undertaken to disprove an Argument, on which the Ejected Ministers laid a considerable stress, 'tis pretty much that he should think, his declaring that he *hardly believed he should ever see their Argument, (or any part of it) demonstrated,* a sufficient Answer. Supposing there were not a Demonstration (which all Cases wont bear) if there be but an over-bearing Probability, 'tis a sufficient Foundation of a Wise Man's Practice. But when he intimates that the whole thing turns upon this; whether their Silence, or holding on in their Ministry was more for the Honour of God, and the Good of the Church, &c. (which was what our Fathers Thought would scarce admit of a serious Debate) for him to put the Proof on them, or to think his contrary Assertion would convince, does not to me look like Mr. *Hoadly*. But if he can't think that this Argument

ment is sufficient to vindicate the Continuance of their Publick Ministrations, we can't help it: He must allow us to differ in our Sentiments from him, till it is better disprov'd.

The next Plea of our Fathers for the Continuance of their Ministry, was this: *They found the Necessities of the People in most Parts of the Nation great, notwithstanding the Legal Provision for them: Many Ministers in the Publick Churches having more Souls to look after, than several would be sufficient for.* And here Mr. Hoadly is pretty p. 28. warm. *He desires to be Pardon'd if he tells us, that it is not sincere to alledge that in Vindication of their Publick Ministrations, which we know was not the true Reason of their Continuing them.* Want of sincerity is, it must be own'd, a Considerable Charge. And yet as far as I am Concern'd, the Gentleman has an Ample Pardon. For I am very sensible how natural 'tis to drop Charges of that Nature, in the Heat of a Debate. Tho' Perhaps he won't immediatly Pardon himself, when he Considers, that our Fathers being Antecedently Convinc'd, that holding on in their Ministry was their Duty, because of their Ordination Vow, and that they might not bury their Talent, &c. their next Concern lay to Enquire, what room there was for their Usefulness, when their Places were supply'd by others? And here this Consideration came in; which therefore might very well be Pleaded: Not indeed as a Reason by it self; But as a Confirming Evidence of their Duty to persist in their Ministry, since there was so much room and Occasion, for their Usefulness, notwithstanding the Publick Provision of Ministers. When then he says, that *such* p. 29. *a Practice* as that of the Ejected Ministers cannot possibly be founded upon such a Reason as this; I only move he'll state the matter a little more fairly,

fairly, and I'm free to debate it with him. If it had by solid Reasons been really prov'd to have been their Duty to be silent, and cease from their Ministry, its granted, this Reason would not have afforded sufficient Foundation for their Continuing to Officiate : But if they had a Talent which they were bound to improve to the Honour of the Donor, and the Good of their Fellow Servants ; I think this Consideration of *the Necessities of the People in most Parts of the Nation*, helps to Clear their way : In as much as it presents them with an Opportunity of some Service, and room for being in some measure Useful, notwithstanding the Loss of the Favour of the Magistrate, for want of Compliance with unnecessary Impositions.

But he says, *He does not grant that the Necessities of the People are so great and pressing, as we would have the World believe them to be.* We can only desire that Persons will consider, and compare, and then are free that they should judge according to Evidence. He says, *The Churches and other Places for religious Assemblies annex'd to them, in which they may meet and pray, and hear God's Word, are not so little, in many of those Parishes, which have given occasion to this Plea, but that they will hold many more People than ordinarily frequent them, and with no great inconvenience.* What Churches he may particularly have in his Eye I cannot say : But I am well satisfy'd, there are several Parishes in and about London, where all the Churches, Chappels and Meeting-Houses that are in them, put together, would not hold a Sixth Part of the Inhabitants. *But, says he, the People of these Parishes may as easily frequent the Churches of their neighbouring Parishes, which are not so large ; as many from these neighbouring Parishes frequent your separate Assemblies.* 'Tis true, they may so ; and I know

know nothing to hinder them, if they are so dispos'd ; unless the Canon against going to neighbouring Churches (upon which, by the way, a certain Gentleman has been lately prosecuted) if they were aware of it : But still, there's room eno' for Dissenting Ministers too. Nay, in most Parts of the Nation, more Ministers than the Publick Establishment supports and maintains, are really necessary in order to a due Care of Souls. And this is capable of Demonstration ; and has been acknowledg'd by many of the *Church of England*, tho' Mr. H. in this Case is so backward to own it. But bating this, he tells us, that which *he insists upon is this, that this cannot be the true reason of the Practice of these Ejected Ministers* (and he seems to take in their Successors too) *and therefore ought not to be alledged in justification of it.* 'Tis granted, 'tis not the only Reason ; for there are several others : But it is a Consideration that was a great Inducement to many to set up separate publick worshipping Assemblies ; and that help'd to confirm others ; and it might very justly do so, and therefore it may well be alledg'd among the Reasons of their Practice.

You know very well (says he) *that as considerable* p. 30.
Persons as any amongst you, make no scruple of settling in Parishes of as little Extent as any in London? What then? tho' some do, we know Mr. Baxter did otherwise ; and might not he use this plea, because the Practice of some others differ'd from his? Besides, in such a Place as the City of London, the Stress of the Argument does not ly upon the Case of this and that particular Parish, so much as upon the Disproportion between the Number of Inhabitants in general, and the number of Publick Churches. This may be so clear, as to amount to a sufficient Evidence of a Necessity in the general, of more Help ; and
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when that is Evident, I think the Conveniency of Minister and People, is to determine the Situation of the Place of Worship: And whether the Parish in which a Meeting is open'd be within the City or without; in a large Parish or small one; it comes much to one. *That People will come thither from all Quarters*, is not indeed improbable; nor is it to be prevented: But that therefore there is no need of them, or that either the Ministers or People have reason thence to think so, is yet to be prov'd. *That the Congregations of these Ejected Ministers and their Successors, are not wholly made up of those Persons whom their Established Minister is not able to take Care of*, may very well be suppos'd: And yet there may be many more in and about London in the whole, than all the Parish Ministers put together, may be able to take any tolerable Care of: And supposing there to be in these separate Congregations, a considerable Number of those *who will not let the Establish'd Minister take Care of them; who would not come to the Worship and Service of the Church of England, were the Places of Assembly ten times more Capacious than they are, and the settled Minister never so able and ready to instruct them*, it does not follow they are to be thereupon refus'd; till the Reasons they go upon are enquir'd into, which we shall consider in the Sequel. But to say, there are none go to Meetings, because they han't Convenience in their Parish Church, (which is the Case refer'd to in this Argument, though Mr. Hoadly otherwise expresses it,) is a running the Matter too far.

p. 31. He says, they han't the *least reason to think that our Ministers would lay aside the Publick Exercise of their Ministry, if all the People had Oportunity of Worshipping God in the Publick Churches*: Wherein I am much of his Mind; because of an Antecedent

dent Duty by Positive Engagement ; and because of the Legal Toleration ; &c. and yet it does not follow but the want of more Help in the Ministry may be a great Additional Motive to those that are engag'd in it already, to persist in their work ; and also to take care of a Succession after them. He goes on : *We find you all generally as little Scrupulous of Ministering Publickly where the Establish'd Ministers are able to take Care of the Souls in their Parishes, where the Churches stand very thick, and are capacious eno' to hold many more than those that belong to them, as of Ministering in the most Populous Parishes.* It was not thus with Mr. Baxter nor many others of the Ejected Ministers formerly. But since the Toleration, this Remark will hold. And I must confess, I think the Practice is not without Reason. For if the Magistrate that laid the Confinement, is pleas'd to take it off, I see not why Ministers should refuse to Preach, where-ever they have a Call and Opportunity. He further adds ; *we see you but little concern'd that the People should make use of the Opportunities they have in the way Establish'd : And not at all backward to receive and encourage any, though under no such Necessities, as you here represent them.* We press People to go, where they can get most Good for their Souls ; and find most of the Presence of God ; be it in the way Established or not ; and this we think is as much as becomes us. And as for encouraging those that are under no such Necessities ; 'tis granted, that is not made the Test : And yet I know not that we encourage them in any Liberty that God has not allowed. Well then (says this Gentleman) *observing these Practices we cannot but wonder at the Mention of this Principle ; and therefore Appeal to all the World, whether this be not very odd Reasoning.* Well then, let's consider and compare the Principle and the
Pra-

Practice. The Principle is this, that wherever the Publick Provision of Ministers, in any City or Burrough, or Town Corporate, is not sufficient for a due Care of the Inhabitants, there there is room for the Assistant Labours of such as God hath furnished with suitable Ministerial Abilities: And that where the Government casts a Company of Valuable Ministers by, as super-numeraries, if they find themselves after such an Ejection obliged to continue their Service as Providence gives them an Opportunity; they being called by a Number of Professing Christians in such Cities, Burroughs or Towns Corporate, are presented with such an Opportunity. This is the *Principle*. The *Practice* is this: When such an Opportunity offers; when a Number of professing Christians make choice of one as their Minister, desiring him to conduct them in the way to Heaven, they accept it, without enquiring whether they come out of one Parish or another; or whether or no their Parish Church will hold them; or be full or empty. Now where's the Inconsistency, between this *Principle* and this *Practice*? Let him state both fairly, and he may *Appeal* to whom he Pleases. His stating the Argument on our side, we Object Against. None among us, ever argu'd as he represents.

P. 32. 33. *The People in many Parishes are at a Loss: And therefore we think it our Duty to Minister in Publick, not only to those that are so; but to all that will attend upon us, let the Motive be what it will. Not only to settle in these Parishes, where the People lie under Difficulties, but in any others where we think fit.* This is an Argument of his own forming. Our Father's Argument stood thus. Whereas when they urg'd their Obligation from their Ordination Vow, and the Necessity of improving the Talent with which God had entrusted them; they

they were told by their Brethren there was no room for them, for that all Places were full, they produc'd this Consideration, in their own Justification: And told them that the Publick Provision was not sufficient, to take Care of the Souls of the People; and to Evidence this they mention'd some particular large Parishes, where the thing was so evident as to admit of no Debate. But they never pretended, that because the Churches in these Parishes would not hold the Inhabitants, they might therefore preach where-ever they would. But having prov'd it their Duty to Preach as Providence offer'd an Opportunity, they urg'd the small number of Publick Ministers as an Argument, that there was an Opportunity offer'd, as well as an Inclination. And if Mr. Hoadly will still say, *it is not fair to urge this in Defence* of the Ejected Ministers, we cannot help it: He must give us leave to say, their *Practice is as well defended by it*, as they expected it would; inasmuch as it is hereby evident, that Providence did not deny them an Opportunity of acting agreeably to their Obligation.

It was farther pleaded by the Ejected Ministers, *That sundry of the Establish'd Ministers were insufficient and unqualified.* This Mr. Hoadly seems unwilling to understand. He says, *he supposes they could not mean [Evil and Wicked] by insufficient and unqualify'd.*— Why not? when none are more unqualify'd for the Ministry, than Persons that are known to be *evil and wicked.* He gives this Reason why that could not be their Sense, *viz. Because it was their Opinion, that the Ministry of such may be us'd both in hearing the Word of God, and in receiving of the Sacraments, and that with Profit, if the People be not wanting to themselves.* And it must be own'd, that this was the Opinion of the Generality of them, that it was not impossi-

p. 34.

ble to profit under such, where no better could be had: But he should have prov'd (if he is able) that they ever deliver'd it as their Opinion, that evil and wicked Ministers were to be preferr'd before those that had been found to be serious and faithful; which would have been the Case in many Places in 1662. had the People deserted their ancient Ministers, and adher'd to those who succeeded them. He goes on, *And if their Ministry might be us'd with profit, then the case of the People under such Ministers was not, in their Account, so desperate, as to make their publick Assistance a necessary Remedy.* But where's the Argument, when tho' the Ministry of a flagitious Person may possibly be profitable to People, that can have no better help; yet when these Ministers whom the Government was for setting aside, were capable of guarding them from such a Mischief, and were earnestly desir'd by the People to do it, it might be their Duty to comply, tho' their Case was not absolutely desperate, had they refus'd. *But, says he, if their publick Assistance was not necessary, it ought not to be continued.* There are several degrees of *Necessity*. For my part I should think their continuing their Ministry among those to whom they had before stood in a Pastoral Relation, had been justifiable, if it was *necessary* to the thriving of such a People, tho' not *necessary* to their Salvation; if it was necessary to save them from a vicious Minister, and the Mischief he would do them; tho' not so necessary, as that they must have been all absolutely damn'd without it. As for the 26th Article, which he tells us the Ministers have Subscrib'd, 'tis not much to the purpose. For tho' 'tis freely granted, *that the effect of Christ's Ordinance is not taken away by the wickedness of the Minister*; yet he that should plead that, or any thing else

else in that Article, as an Argument, why a loose and vicious Minister should be prefer'd to one that is sober and serious, or why one of the later sort should leave his People in the hands of one of the former stamp, when they earnestly desir'd his Continuance, would deserve Pity, rather than an Answer. However he will have it, that when 'twas said several of the establish'd Ministers were *insufficient and unqualify'd*, it must be meant that they were *ignorant and unable to teach and instruct the People*. Nay, and he will have it, that this is meant *not as to their insufficiency for private labours, but publick*; and, that all that was meant was this, *That the insufficiency of some Parish Ministers was so great, that the Souls of the People were endanger'd by their Attendance on their Publick Ministrations; and, that it was necessary on this account, to minister publickly in a separate way*. If Mr. H. had tho't fit to have consultéd *Mr. Baxter's Apology for the Non-Conformist Ministers*, publish'd in 1681, which I here cited in the Margin, he would have found the short Hints I gavé upon this Head considerably dilated on, and needed not to have been at a loss as to the Sense of this, or any other of these Arguments. But if he can bear it, I must tell him, 'twas *insufficiency* of all sorts that sundry of the Ministers were chargeable with: Many of those who were to succeed our Fathers when they were Ejectéd, had such gross Defects, some in their *Morals*, and some in their *Intellectuals*, and some in both, that they could have little comfort to leave their People in their hands, especially when they desir'd their Stay among them: Falling short therefore in the Sense of the Argument, his Answer can be no other than Defective: However, I'll take it as far as it goes, and consider his 3 Positions by way of Reply.

p. 35.

1. He says, *Supposing it true, that there were ignorant Ministers in the Church of England, yet this is not a sufficient reason for the People to forsake that Church, and betake themselves to a separate Ministry, and form themselves into Churches distinct from it.* I answer, If the Ministers to come in the room of those whom the Law ejected, were so insufficient as to justify the People in desiring their former Ministers to stay among them, and them to continue their Ministry, 'tis all it was brought for: And this is what Mr. H. I think, should have disprov'd, if he would have weaken'd the Argument. But I'll a little follow him in his arguing, tho' I see it wanders from the Point to which it should have been directed. *No Church upon Earth (says he) in which there are some thousands of Ministers, can possibly escape this unhappiness: (i. e. to have some among them that are insufficient.)* I can easily believe him, and yet must needs say, I think that Church not only *unhappy*, but *unmerciful* too, that not only has insufficient Ministers, but will oblige People to take such in the room of those who are known to be well qualify'd, and under whose Labours they have profited. *It is a little hard indeed, if upon an unhappiness wholly unavoidable, new and distinct Churches, with differing Modes of Worship, must be erected, for the improvement of the Knowledge, and the destruction of the Love and Charity of the Christian People.* Certainly Mr. Hoadly has forgot the difference between *Argument* and *Aggravations*; and between *Prejudices to support a Party*, and *Arguments to maintain a Cause*. But be it as it will as to that, I must tell him, that 'tis more than a *little hard* for the honest People of a Parish, to be rent from a Minister, whose Doctrine and Life they had found Beneficial, into the hands of one, who was rather like to do them hurt than good by both;

and who, instead of spreading *Love and Charity* among them, would make it his Business to run down serious Religion as *Fanaticism*, and encourage Profaneness and Looseness, as a Badge either of a true Son of the Church, or of a Loyal Subject; and yet this was the Case in sundry Parishes in the Year 1662.

He goes on in a most Pompous and Pathetical manner. *But if ever any Church upon Earth may be said to have taken Care that the People shall not suffer Considerably, or their Salvation be endanger'd, thro' this inconvenience, Certainly it must be granted the Church of England has Effectually done it.* Good Sir not so fast: What say you to the Primitive times, when they had neither Liturgys, nor Ceremonys, nor any of those things that Distinguish you from us? When the Ministers were so Eminent for the Holiness of their Lives, the Indefatigableness of their Labours and their abounding Gifts and Graces, and needed none of those Crutches, which are now found to be so necessary? *Were the Publick Assemblies indeed left to the Sole management and guidance of the Minister of the Parish, or the President of the Christian Assembly, as they appear to have been in the Primitive times; were the People to be serv'd with nothing but what he could afford them, were they to be entertain'd with Prayers, wholly according to the abilitys, or the present Fancy, invention and disposition of their Minister; which was their unhappy Case in Justin Martyr's days, and for sometime after; were he left to his Liberty whether he would read to them any Part of Gods Word, or not; which yet the Generality of the Ejected Ministers, read in their Assemblys, and some of them took the Pains to Expound in a familiar manner, besides their Descanting upon it in their Sermons. Whether he would use the Lords Prayer, the Creed, the Ten*

Commandments or not; which he may Conclude the Body of the Ejected Ministers were as much afraid off as they were of their Bibles: By this time I am out of Breath, and so I suppose is my Reader: Let him then Recollect; were it thus and thus as has been said; *were the Poor People in such a Case, under the Trovifion of the Church of England, then indeed the Ignorance of their Minister might be a deplorable Misfortune to them.* A fair Conclusion! But is it not so, as it is? I can Easily draw him a Parallel for his Harangue. Had those who were to succeed our Fathers when the Law Ejected them, been universally Men of Greater Ministerial Abilitys; Had they been more Eminent for their Seriousness; their Love to Souls; their readines to spend and be spent in the service of Christ, it had been more tolerable. Had there been any Prospect that they would have carry'd on the Work of the Lord amongst them more effectually, and more successfully, they might with some satisfaction have resign'd them to their Care. But when the Case was so directly contrary, in many Places; when some of those that came to succeed them could declare, they would set themselves to pull down what their Predecessors had for many Years been building: When there were so many of them that were full of Enmity and Rancour, against any thing almost that lookt like seriousness; in this Case, for our Fathers to be press'd to sit still, and let these Persons labour in their room, was a *little hard*: or if I much admir'd the Words, I might say, 'twas a *deplorable Misfortune.* These are the Considerations that sway'd our Fathers. I have only given this Touch that Mr. Hoadly may see how easily I could retaliate in the same way: But I am really tir'd with it; and therefore I shall only give some brief strictures on what remains. He

He Thanks God that there is such Provision for the Necessities of the People in the *Church of England*. And so can we, and yet think it was very justifiable in our Fathers to continue their Ministry, where they found those that were to succeed them *wretchedly insufficient*. Which Plea, tho' liable to abuse, may yet certainly be allow'd a Place, where we have to do with *the most insufficient Minister we can find*. He says, *In the Church, the People have no necessity of departing from the most insufficient Minister you can easily find*. Suppose they are not under an absolute *necessity* of it in order to their Salvation; yet there may be a *necessity* of it in order to greater Edification. He mightily magnifies the standing Provision of the Church. But supposing it ever so good of the Kind, it does not follow, either that an honest Christian in 1662, was bound to prefer an ignorant careless Minister that was sent as a Successor before his former Pastor, under whom he had found much of the Presence of God in his Ordinances; or that the Minister that had such a Successor, was bound upon his Coming to be silent, tho' the People earnestly press't for the continuance of his Labours—. When he refers the People to *Neighbouring Ministers*, he seems to have forgotten the Canon. In some Places, the People having lost their ancient Ministers did take the Method which he here directs to; they went to neighbouring Parishes, where there was better Preaching than at home: But I can't hear their own Parish Ministers were less offended or disturb'd, than if they had kept their former Ministers among them. But

p. 39, 40.

2. Mr. Hoadly says, *In the Places where this Plea can be urg'd with the best Grace, it is very great Odds whether the People get anything by forsaking their Parish Minister, and attending upon those Ministers*

who separate from the *Establisht Church*. And here he runs wholly off from the Year 1662, to the Present time; whereas it was the Case of the Ministers then Ejected we had under Consideration; and it was their Plea on their own behalf that was before us. The *insufficient Ministers* which this part of the Plea refers to, were far from being confin'd to the *Parishes at the greatest distance from London and other considerable Towns*: There were many in all Parts; In Citys, Burroughs and Towns Corporat, aswell as in Villages, and lesser Hamlets. And as Poor Judges as the People are of the *Abilitys of their Ministers*; the most Boorish that had sate for some time under a serious Ministry, may be suppos'd able to make a Distinction, between those whose design it was to help them to Heaven, and those with whom the Ministry was but a Trade; between those that minded their Souls, and those who car'd not for the Flock, so they had but the Fleece.

If indeed they had found in any of their former Ministers that *gross and intolerable ignorance* which Mr. Hoadly speaks of, its easily agreed they had little Reason to be fond of them: this very Consideration might reconcile them to a Change: And tis not such Cases that the Plea refers to. And tho' it sometimes happens, and can't be deny'd to be true, that the *most insufficient* (as to knowledge) are *much followed and preferrd* before Persons of much greater Abilitys; yet it does not therefore follow, that an Ejected Minister was bound to cease from his Ministry, when his successor was either grossly ignorant, or Scandalous. Had the *most sufficient of the Establisht Ministry* been settled in those Places, where the *most sufficient of the Ejected Ministers* were to have been found; and had they sent the *most ignorant and insufficient of the Establisht Ministry*, to confront and oppose, the *most insufficient and most igno-*

rant of the Ejected Ministry; (the Opposite method whereto he would insinuate, has been since Politickly pursu'd among the Dissenters) this Plea had been much weakned: But as matters were manag'd it was very strong, in the Case of many. If Mr. *Hoadly* will have it that suppose the successor of the Ejected Minister was *truly insufficient*, there was little Likelyhood of any Advantage to the People, by forsaking their Parish Church, and frequenting the Labours of their Former Minister in a seperate Congregation, he has the Liberty of his own Opinion. Their Leaving the Publick service (which is so much Applauded,) could be no Grievance at all, to those who might have had it in their seperate Congregation, had they tho't it preferable to the way they had been us'd to addressing God, suitably to the Great Variety of Circumstances and Occasions. But why he should suppose these Ejected Ministers (or their successors either) should *not much Care the People should be sensib'le what it is they leave*, when they Leave the Liturgy of the Church; I cant imagine. I don't see how it could be kept from them, (as the Bible among the Papists) that they should not read it. The Church Doors were open that they might go in and hear it. How could they conceal it from them if they were ever so desirous of it? Or why should they desire it, if they were able? I can't see Reason for either. This would give fairer Scope I think verily to an Invective, than any thing fasten'd on in the *Admonition to Mr. Calamy*. But I have neither Leisure nor inclination.

3 He says farther, that *this Plea how good soever it be in it self, yet was not the true Reason*, why our Fathers continu'd their Publick Ministrations. I hope it may be allow'd for one Reason among others, when many of them have expressly declar'd

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clar'd it was so in their Case. Aye, But *The World can easily see what their Practice has been, and is : and, say what they please, will judge of their Principles from it.* In Proof of this he urges their Policy; *That the most sufficient of them planted themselves where the most sufficient of the Establish'd Clergy were to be found ; and the Places which first gave Occasion to this Pretence, are left to the most insufficient and unworthy of them : and this (he says) looks as if more regard were had to the maintaining the Credit, and supporting the Interest of a Party, than to the supplying the Necessities of the People, or making up the Deficiencies of the Establish'd Ministry.* I hope however he'l distinguish between 1662 and the times that followed. In 1662 many of the Ejected Ministers, who had valuable and worthy Men for their Successors, rather quitted the place than continued there ; that the Affection of their former People to them, might not any way discourage those that came after them. If many of these afterwards came up to *London*, or settled in any other City, or considerable Market Town, where their Help was desired, I can't see why it should be an Offence to any one. Others of them, who had such Successors continu'd among their People, and had an hearty Correspondence with the Publick Minister, and gave their former People some little private help, in Concurrence with him, and out of the usual times of Assembling in the Church. These were afterwards scatter'd by the five-mile Act, and were glad of an Habitation, where Providence offer'd one. Others of them, who had but indifferent Successors, or who were insufficient, continu'd among their People after their Ejection ; labouring among them as they had Opportunity : And they were harass'd and worry'd, imprison'd and fin'd, till they and their Families were like

to starve; in which case I think they may well be supposed glad to fix where they and theirs could have a tolerable Subsistence, together with some Capacity of Service. And thus it continu'd till some Connivance was afforded by the Government. And if form'd Congregations, as they became Destitute, and as their former Pastors dropp'd off by Death, provided themselves with as Able Men, as they could get, I should think Charity should incline standers by, rather to ascribe this to concern for their own Souls, than any undue Zeal for a Party. And if since there has been a Legal Toleration afforded them, there has been some Care taken, that the most considerable Congregations should be well supply'd, I see not how this is blame-worthy; or inconsistent with the Plea of our Fathers, that the Insufficiency of many that were to succeed them when they were ejected, contributed to their Satisfaction, in continuing their Ministry in Publick. And let Mr. *Hoadly* exaggerate as he pleases, this Argument was very strong in the Case of many whom the Act for Uniformity silenced.

But one thing I think its requisite to touch upon, which Mr. *Hoadly* mentions with some disgust both under this and some other Heads; in which perhaps he may have an Eye to some particular Persons yet living. He Complains, that we Ministers among the Dissenters don't encourage the People to attend upon their Establish'd ministers, when they are ever so sufficient. But has he Consider'd how often they have laugh'd at such as have done so, as condemning themselves, by such a Recommendation? And is not that a discouragement? Or how do's he know we dont encourage them to attend upon them *Occasionally*? And if we do so, must we urge them to do it *Constantly*? We see no Necessity: For tho' these Parish Ministers may

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be *sufficient*, (*i. e.* Men of Good Learning, and sober in their Lives) yet they may be sower in their Spirits; and in such a Case, I know not why it should be expected, we should urge those upon whom we may have any Influence. Or they may pretend to a Right to a Pastoral Relation to all in the Parish, by Vertue of the Presentation of a Patron, and the Institution and Induction of a Bishop: And so may claim that Authority over the People as due, which we reckon much better suspended till there be Personal Consent. They may this way break in upon their Natural Right; or they may perhaps frighten them by their Heat; especially when it is found to grow instead of abating, with Years: Which Heat to be sure is yet the more Remarkable, if it runs into an Impatience of any Contradiction; and an inveighing against others for sticking at such and such Matters; when possibly they might formerly have been themselves kept out of the Publick Establishment, by things of smaller Importance: To observe this; and at the same time find these Parish Ministers, when an Opportunity offers for Conversation, continually running upon Controversial Matters; and discovering a Contempt of their Adversaries, inveighing against the Ministers of the Dissenters as no Ministers; and frequently running out in sly Reflections upon those, whom they look upon as robbing them of their Auditors, whom yet they can Compliment at a mighty rate, when they themselves come in their way: The observing such Things as these, may well be allowed to discourage both Ministers and People in such a Case.

Our Fathers also argued in their own Vindication for continuing their Ministry, *from several Texts of Scripture, which intimate the Duration of the Ministerial Office, where there is once a*

Conveyance. But Mr. H. says, That none of the Passages mentioned do express or imply, that a Person who hath Authority once given him to Minister publickly in a Christian Congregation, may not upon some Considerations lay aside the publick Exercise of his Ministry. And this (he says) is what these Texts must prove, if they prove any thing to our present purpose. I reply: That it is enough to answer the end for which the Passages are produc'd, if they prove, that the Ministerial Office is for Life, wherever the ends of it are secured.

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It is indeed a possible thing for Ministers to commit some scandalous Faults, which may have a Tendency to prevent their future Usefulness: In such Cases, and indeed whenever the great Ends of the Ministry would be obstructed, so as that there is not a Capacity or Likelihood of helping Souls in the way to Heaven, there the Obligation Ceases: But in other Cases, the Places of Scripture cited are of weight. And yet they were not pleaded alone; but in Conjunction with other Considerations.

But says Mr. H. I might venture to affirm, that it is impossible or at least highly improbable, that there should be any thing of this absolute Obligation in any Passage of the New Testament. For it is certain, that the Case may so happen, that the Silence of a Person, who had once a Commission given him to Officiate in Publick, may be of much more Advantage to the Christian Church, than his publick Ministrations, &c. 'Tis granted it may be so; upon Supposition a Person so Commissionated appears afterwards to be grossly unqualified, either with Respect to his Intellectuals or Morals: But that it can be so in any other Case, should have been prov'd, before it could reasonably be expected Credit should be given to the Assertion. That Persons duly qualified and fitted for Service, and whose

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whose

whose continued Service in the Church was desired by those whom God had made them singularly Useful to, had any Reason to be discouraged by any Suggestion of this Nature, I cannot discover.

As for the particular Places of Scripture, which our Fathers urg'd in their own Vindication, I shall refer those who are willing to see the Argument drawn from them, in its full Strength, set in a due Light, to Mr. *Baxter's Defence of the Nonconformists Ministry in Quarto*. For as I took them from thence, so will they be there found clear'd, from the Glosses put upon them by Mr. *Hoadly*. And I am willing to save my self the Pains of Transcribing. However in the General, I think if Ministers are the *Salt of the Earth* in a peculiar manner, (as our Saviours so stiling his Disciples in particular, would seem to intimate) it can be no force to represent those as desiring them to *lose their Savour*, who would have perswaded them while they were capable of being useful to many Souls, to desist from the Ministry. And if Ministers are in a special manner *the Light of the World*, to give Light to others in the way to Heaven, then they who would deny them a Liberty of continuing their Labours, while they were capable of Considerable service, were for their *hiding their Light*, and *putting their Candel under a Bushel*, which is the very thing warn'd against by *Mat. 5. 13, 14*. And to insinuate, that any Persons at any time, who have so good an Opinion of themselves as to think their publick Labours useful, would be this way defended and Patroniz'd, is to argue as if Persons whose Abilitys had been try'd and approv'd, and who were willing to subject themselves to any further Censure, According to the Gospel Rule, were in the same

Condition, with those who either are known to be unqualify'd, or will only make themselves the Judges. And how fair this is, I leave the Gentleman to Consider at his Leisure. However if he had read Mr. *Baxter*, whom I particularly referr'd to, I hardly suppose he would have said that *he could not have imagin'd that this Place had any Relation to this matter, unless I had here expressly said so.* For he would have found Mr. *Baxter* referring to it, from whom I had it.

Again; if the Apostolical Commission *Matt.* 28. p. 53. 19, 20; be that which empowers all Gospel Ministers in the Exercise of their Office, (which Mr. *Hoadly* won't Easily be able to disprove) then must it be their Duty to persist in Acting According to it, till it can be prov'd their Commission is revok'd. But when Mr. *Hoadly* takes a Liberty to suppose, that the *Publick Preaching* even of the *Apostles* themselves might *have had very bad Consequences, and have reflected a dishonour, and mischief upon the Christian Cause,* (which is what our Fathers could never imagine) there is so much the less reason to wonder, he should suppose the same in the case of the Ejected Ministers: But it does not follow in either Case, that there was any real Danger, because he Thinks it to his Purpose, to suppose and take it for granted it might be so. And while Gospel Ministers, continue to Act agreeably to their Commission, in *Teaching all things that* p. 54. *Christ has commanded them,* they do but their Plain Duty: And they may as safely depend upon the Promise, that *he will be with them to the End of the World,* (in that measure that is necessary for them) even as the Apostles themselves.

Yet farther; since it appears from *Eph.* 4. 10. p. 55. &c. that the several Orders of Ministers under the Gospel Dispensation were given *for the Perfecting of*
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of the Saints and for the Edifying the Body of Christ, &c. I think it is very Evident, that for Persons whom God has qualify'd for *Edifying the Body of Christ*, and own'd in their endeavours that way, and whose continu'd Labours were earnestly desir'd by such as had a Prospect of being farther edify'd by them; for such to Cease from their Labours had been to Cross those Ends for which the Ministry was given.

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Again, Tho' the Labours of the Ejected Ministers were not so *necessary to the being of the Christian Church in England*, as the Labours of *Timothy* were at *Ephesus*, when the Apostle gave him that *Charge*, 1 Tim. 4. 15, 16: Yet does that *Charge* take Place, wheresoever any Have a True Commission to Exercise the Ministry, till it can be prov'd that that Commission is revok'd and vacated.

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And finally; where Persons once Commissionated for the Ministry have acted faithfully, and found God's Presence with them, and were still urged to continue their Ministry, by those whom they had been useful to, or others that needed their help, I can't see, but they might take Comfort in the Benediction, *Matth. 24. 45, 46*; Nay might be obliged to hold on their Labours as ever they expected it; and must be bound to continue so doing, as ever they expected to be *blessed by their Lord when he comes*. Ay, but says Mr. *Hoadly*, this was the way, in the Case of these Ejected Ministers, to give Encouragement by their Practice to a

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Separation, which must necessarily divide the Hearts of Christians from one another, and unavoidably contribute to the Decrease of Charity and the abounding of Strife and Variance, and Emulation, and all the Instances of Uncharitableness in the World. But let the ill Consequences attending the Separation be ever so many, they are to be charged upon those who would rather run the hazard of them, than for-

forbear their *Needless Impositions*; and not on those who in Pursuit of their Commission which they receiv'd from their Great Lord and Master, (which it is hard to say how any Prince or Bishop cou'd revoke) Continu'd to teach the People, who desir'd their Help, *all the things that Christ had commanded them.*

The next Argument of our Fathers in their own Vindication, while they persisted in their Ministry, was drawn from such Passages of Scripture, as *Plead for the Necessity of Preaching, even when the Magistrate forbids.* And here also, I refer Mr. Hoadly to the foremention'd Book of Mr. Baxter, for the clearing of these Texts, as under the former Head. To one indeed that thinks, that in some Cases, *the publick Preaching, or other Ministrations, even of the Apostles, might have had very bad consequences, and have reflected a dishonour and mischief upon the Christian Cause,* it is very possible this Argument may appear of no great force: But it does not therefore follow, it must be the like with those that are satisfied, that neither the Publick Preaching of the Apostles, nor of any inferiour Gospel Ministers that are duly qualify'd, and fitted for Service, and follow the Gospel Rule in their Ministrations, can have any such *bad Consequences,* as ought to discourage them, or can be really *dishonourable and mischievous to the Christian Cause.* And what tho' it be not said, that there was *the same necessity for the publick preaching of these silenc'd Ministers, in such a Country as England, as there was for St. Peter and St. John, St. Paul, and Timothy, their propagating the Gospel; as there was for their preaching Jesus Christ to those who could never have heard of him without them, &c.* Yet since there are many degrees of *Necessity,* it is eno', if their continu'd Labours were so necessary, as that many

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without them would not have been awaken'd, converted and fitted for Heaven. This is what they then apprehended; and what we that come after them, think appears from the Sequel. But let Mr. *Hoadly* once prove, that without the *Publick Labours*, of our Fathers, *Christians* might have been more effectually edify'd in Love, and Peace, and Concord, and all other Christian Graces necessary to fit for the Heavenly State; and that this might have been done more effectually, to as great a number of Christians, without their Labours as with them, and 'twill be freely own'd he has enervated this Argument. But not till then.

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The last Argument of our Fathers, which Mr. *Hoadly* touches on, had been thus exprest. They found it was their Duty, to pray for the sending in of faithful Labourers, Matth. 9. 38. Luke 10. 2. And could not but think the sending up of such a request to God, a mocking of him, while such as they were, ceas'd to labour, who had been call'd and qualify'd, own'd and succeeded. And here he is pretty warm. He would have had them quitted their *Publick Ministry*, as being sensible, that there was sufficient Provision for the Souls of the People in the *Establisht Church*. But alas! it was so far from this, that upon serious Consideration, they were sensible of the contrary. They were sensible that the Number of *Publick Ministers* was not sufficient; and that of that Number that were deputed to succeed them, many were wretchedly insufficient, some on the Account of their gross Ignorance, and others on Account of their scandalous Immoralities: And therefore they might well think it, a mocking of God, had they made it a Petition in their daily Prayers, that he would send forth faithful Labourers into his Vineyard, if they had ceas'd to labour; for nothing certainly is a more proper mocking of God, than a pretending earnestly

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to beg of him, what we our selves will not contribute to, according to our Ability; than a seeming Earnest for that, which is neglected by us, as far as he has put it in our Power. When he adds, *The Reason of their continuing their Publick Ministrations, was because they imagin'd it more for the Advantage of Christs Church, than the laying them aside; not because they could not put up this Petition without mocking God, if they should have laid them aside*: I reply; Both were Reasons in their place; and I don't think it worth while to contend which should have the Preference. When then he asks, *Why is not that which is the only material Point, insisted upon and clearly demonstrated?* I answer, they did not apprehend that which he fastens on, to be *the only material Point*: But if he tho't it so, methinks he should have taken more pains clearly to disprove it, and that way to have overthrown all their Arguments at once. But what would we have of the Gentleman? he frankly tells us in so many words, *He has done what he can to shew, that the Necessities of Souls did not call them to it; which he apprehends, the only thing that can defend their Practice*: But now, Sir, tho' our Fathers were told all this, and a great deal more to the same purpose, over and over; they found the *Necessities* of Souls still great; and they found God owning them in their Labours, while they set themselves to serve these *Necessities*: And tho' I am no admirer of Comparisons ordinarily, in such Cases, yet I'll venture to say, that I verily believe they were as instrumental to spread Serious Religion, and help Souls to Heaven, not only as any like Number of Ministers in *England*, but as any like Number of Ministers, that have been in any Christian Country, since the Primitive Times. And on this Account they had a great deal of Reason to

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be easie, notwithstanding all the Cavils, Assaults, and Reproaches of their Opposites.

And now I'll look back, upon Mr. *Hoadly's* Management of this Head, which seems to me something Particular. The thing he was to have prov'd, was, that our Fathers had no reason to continue their Publick Ministry, by answering all the Arguments they urg'd. But there is one of them, (and that none of the least considerable neither) which he does not so much as touch upon here, which was thus exprest: *They could not see whence either Civil Magistrates or Bishops had any power to doom them to utter Silence, so long as they could not prove upon them either Apostacy, Heresie or Perfidiousness, or any thing inconsistent with the Publick Peace.* This he does not think fit to debate at present; and what he says to it hereafter, will be consider'd where he mentions it. He declares indeed, that he lays but little stress on the Authority of the Magistrate in the Case; and, I think, less is to be laid on the spiritual Power of Bishops in the Case; who can have no Power from Christ, to silence his Servants, whom he has fitted and qualify'd for Service in his House, while they are able to prove no crime upon them, as the Foundation of their Dooming them to Silence. As this Argument is over-lookt, so the rest are evaded rather than answer'd. The *Ordination Vow* by them reckon'd ever obliging, as long as Capacity and Opportunity of Service was continu'd, he throws off in their Case, upon Pretence it was *Conditional, and respected the Good and Service of the Church*, which is ever promoted by the faithful Labours of qualify'd Ministers. The *Entreaties of their People*, which some of them laid a great stress upon, he banters and exposes by a Formal Speech: But gives no Satisfaction to the Difficulty, in the Case of those
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who were Destitute, where it most pinch'd. He will have it, that tho' they had been silent, they had not been liable to the *Guilt and Doom of the unprofitable servant in the Parable*, when yet upon the account of an unprov'd Danger, he would have had them imitated his Practice, in burying *their Talent*. He makes Light of the *Necessities of the People*, and because some of them exercis'd their Ministry in Parishes where the Churches might hold the Inhabitants, will have it, that none of them were really sway'd by a regard to the Necessities of the Nation, in setting up a separate Ministry, whereby he makes himself a Judge of their Hearts. He represents the *insufficiency* of many of the *Establish'd Ministers* as an inconsiderable matter; so long as the *Liturgy* was continu'd, which it is suppos'd the most *insufficient* could read: But gives no satisfactory account what they were to do in case of Scandalous Immoralities, where the Difficulty was so great. He endeavours to evade the several passages of Scripture cited, as no ways pertinent, because they did not quadrate in all respects; and having done this, he Triumphs as if their Arguments were entirely answer'd. And will this do? The strongest Arguments are easily overthrown by such a Method of Procedure.

But let us see his own Hypothesis. Here were a considerable number of Preachers at once doom'd to Silence, they tho't *unjustly*, and he can't say 'twas *justly* done, and yet he would have had them submitted, and ceas'd from all publick Labours in a Ministerial way. But perhaps they were *irregular intruders* into the Ministerial Office, and so it was fit they should be silenc'd: No such Matter; He does not so much as plead it. He owns that *several of them*, had a true conveyance of the Ministerial Office to them. Well, but

perhaps they were not qualify'd for Service: or they were Lazy, Idle and Useless; and therefore deserv'd to be punish'd. No; *He cannot deny but that many of them were faithful Labourers.* He grants, *that they might have been very useful, had they tho't fit to continue in the Establish'd Church.*

p. 65. Sure none could intend to Doom any such to Silence, and deprive the Church of the Benefit of such mens Labours; Mr. *Hoadly* owns therefore, *That for Persons knowingly and willingly to design to rob the Church of the Labours of such truly good and useful Men, is a shocking thing.* Sure then it must be owing to the Civil Magistrate (not rightly inform'd) that they were silenc'd; and it must be out of Deference to him that they must be oblig'd to keep Silence, that they might not be charg'd with any want of due Respect to Civil Rulers: But here Mr. *Hoadly* frankly discharges them. For he declares, *He urges not the bare Authority of any earthly Power to oblige them to silence; as having but a mean Opinion of the Argument drawn from thence in this Question.*

p. 13. Well then, sure it must be their own fault, if they discontinu'd their Labours; for they might have Conform'd if they would, and so the Church had still had the Benefit of their Ministry. But even here Mr. *Hoadly* goes upon a Supposition that will fully excuse them. For he grants, that

p. 21. tho' they might be Men of Integrity, yet the Terms of Ministerial Conformity might appear such, *after all their consideration, as they could not approve of, or submit to, without Sin.* Well then, What is it that should have oblig'd them to keep Silence? The only thing Pleaded is this, that their Silence had been *more for the Honour of God, and the Good of the Church,* than their holding on in their Ministry: But tho' this is mention'd and warmly asserted over and over, 'tis ta-

ken for Granted and never Prov'd. And yet methinks there is all the reason in the World that this should have had as good Proof as the thing would bear; not only because of the declar'd Importance of it; But also, because of the strength of some common Prejudices, which prevailing, must needs overthrow this Principle, as apply'd to Persons in their Circumstances. For the Generality of those whose Minds have a serious Tincture, are naturally apt to imagine, that the real Saving of Souls, and helping them to Heaven, is a thing of greater Importance than an Agreement in Forms and Ceremonies, even tho' such an Agreement may be recommended as for the Peace of the Church: And that spreading Real Religion is a much more weighty Concern than meer *Uniformity*, which, take it at best, is more *Nominal* than *Real*, even under the Establishment it self. Most of those, who can, in such Cases be at all esteem'd Competent Judges, are apt to think that that God who has declar'd he will *have Mercy and not Sacrifice*, when Persons are set upon advancing his Kingdom amongst Mankind, and when he has qualify'd them for it, and succeeded them in it, he will not disown or condemn them for Failures in Formalities, where their Consciences were not satisfied. These Notions being at least something plausible, should have been eradicated, before it could be expected the Principle should gain Admittance.

But if we take the Principle it self, and closely Consider it, we shall find we are beset on all Hands with Difficultys, that strangely Embarrass us in the Application of it. Mr. H. Asserts that in the Case of these Ejected Ministers, their silence had been more for the *Honour of God and the Good of the Church*, than the Continuance of their Publick Ministry; And out of a sense of

it he would have had them have forborn. I here Query, whether they were bound in this Case to follow the Judgment of the Bishops of the Respective Diocesses, or their own Sentiments upon Mature enquiry? I grant he mentions not the Bishops in this Case. And yet if the Civil Magistrate be dropp'd, it must be upon the Judgment of the Bishops that the stress must be laid. Now what Evidence is there that these Ejected Ministers were bound rather to be sway'd by the Judgment of the Bishops, than by their own deliberate Judgment, after all Circumstances had been maturely weigh'd? Would it have been a sufficient Plea for them at the Day of Judgment, when charg'd with neglecting to do that *good* to Souls which God had qualify'd 'em for, for them to have said, that truly they were willing to have continu'd their Ministerial Labors, but that the Bishops told 'em, it would rather be for the good of the Church for them to forbear? Would this have bro't them off? If this be not rationally to be suppos'd, How then could it be expected, that they should have Acted upon this Bottom? If every Man is bound to Act According to his own Light, How could such a Deference to the Judgment of the Bishops be insisted on? Besides that many Souls have been help'd to Heaven by their continu'd Labours is so evident as to be Undeniable: I mean by their continu'd publick Labours in the Ministry sepe'rate from their private Endeavours. Had they been contentedly silenc'd, any thing of this Kind had been prevented. Now what shadow of Proof is there, that the Spiritual Benefit to so many Souls, had been out weigh'd by that pretended *Peace*, which might have arisen from a Compliance with the *Act for Uniformity*? How could it be more for the *Honour of God*, and *the Good of the Church*, to have had so

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many Persons remain'd unconvinc'd and unreform'd, so many Souls unsav'd, rather than an Order of the Bishops be broken, which they who are their Greatest Admirers have so much to do, to put any plausible Colours on? Or How could our Fathers, in a Case where the Interest of so many Souls were depending, have justify'd their Compliance with such an Order which it self was never yet justify'd? These things have no small Difficulty in 'em; and need more Pains to get 'em well clear'd.

In short then: If Mr. *Hoadly* would really prove our Fathers blameable in persisting in their Ministry he must prove that the Bishops had Authority from Christ to silence them, if they would not comply with their Impositions, (which they could not do with a safe Conscience); and that they in this Case exercis'd their Authority according to the Rule of Scripture. Without this no clamours are of any Significance. For if they were well qualify'd for Service in the Ministry, had been very useful formerly, and might have been still so, (which is not disown'd) then had they no reason to regard the silencing sentence of the Bishops, till the Authority it was bottom'd on was Evidenc'd; and till the sentence was prov'd the effect of a well manag'd Authority, and agreeable to the Rule. If such a sentence was a stretch of the Episcopal Authority, A plain Breach of the Gospel Rule, and what they could not Answer for to God or the Church; and a Compliance with it would at the same time have been to the Damage of many Souls: Such a Compliance of theirs, had been so far from tending to *the Honour of God*, and the *good of the Church*, that it had been a Criminal Breach of Trust, a Violating their Ordination Vow, a Betraying Religion under pretence of promoting Peace; and a great snare to that, and to succeeding Generations.

Part II. But he is also for touching on the Case of those
 p. 69. amongst us, who have Ordain'd others, and of those
 who have been Ordain'd to the Ministry, since the
 p. 70. Act for Uniformity. He says that no Ordination
 Vow and solemn Dedication to God, can be pre-
 tended in their Case: That the People had never Ex-
 perient'd the Labours of those of us who have since taken
 the Ministry upon us: That they had never Contracted
 any relation to us, and so the fear of the guilt of Un-
 faithfulness, cruelty & unmercifulness, could not move us
 either to ordain others, or to be Ordained to the Mini-
 stry. That the Passages of Scripture that intimate the
 Duration of the Ministerial Office, have nothing to
 do where there is no Conveyance, &c. He adds that
 p. 71. Granting the foremention'd Arguments their full
 force, and as much strength as we our selves imagine
 to be in them, they wont in the least Vindicate those
 amongst us, who have either Ordain'd others to
 the Ministry, or been Ordain'd since 1662.

But what sort of Argument is this? All that was pretended to, was to give the Reasons why our Fathers continu'd their Ministry after they were silenc'd: Now suppose these Reasons would not justify *New Ordinations*, How can it be blameable? It is eno' if they Answer the End propos'd, and as much as a reasonable Man can desire. But I suppose he was willing to hear what we had to say for our selves upon this Head. For my part I am ready to satisfy him as far as may be. And therefore shall add, that tho' the Vindicating our Ordinations since 1662, was far eno' from my Tho'ts, when I transcrib'd these Reasons for our Fathers continuing their Ministry after they were silenc'd, out of Mr. Baxter's *Apology*; Yet, if these Reasons will hold, the vindicating our Ordinations will be very easie; and we shall hence receive considerable Assistance.

Tho' we that have been since Ordain'd, cannot plead our Ordination-Vow, in justification of our being so Ordain'd, yet may we after Ordination plead that Vow in justification of our succeeding Ministrations, in which we act in pursuance of that Vow. And being once Ordain'd, it would be as much *Sacrilege* in us to alienate our selves from the Work we have solemnly undertaken, as it would have been in our Fathers: And 'tis the like as to the rest, as far as our Circumstances agree, the same Reasons will justify us, when Ordain'd, as will justify them; tho' they won't argue our Ordinations warrantable, for which they were not produc'd or urg'd.

But the Two Arguments he touches upon, have even, in this Case, a great deal of weight. The one taken from *the insufficiency of sundry of the Parish Ministers*: And the other from *the Necessitys of the People in most parts of the Nation, notwithstanding the legal provision for them*. This latter, Mr. Hoadly owns a sufficient ground for our practice, if it can be fairly and clearly made out. But then he says, *It is his Opinion, that it can never be made out*; that is, *so made out, as to be a good reason for our separate Ministry*. And for proof that neither of these Arguments will do us any Service, he refers, to his foregoing Answers in the case of the Ejected Ministers; and I with like freedom, refer to my Reply to him; and leave every one to their Liberty to judge as they see cause, upon comparing both together. But in order to the Gentleman's Conviction (if there be any room for it) I shall only desire him to compare together the number of Inhabitants in the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, according to a Modest Computation, and the Number of Ministers provided by the Publick in those two Cities, and then to compute (which may be easily done) how ma-

ny Souls must fall under each Minister's Care, upon an exact Division. I am apt to think he'll find by this Calculation, that more help is needful. And if he'll afterwards do the like for the whole Nation, he'll find the Result will be as fair a Demonstration of the Necessities of the People calling for farther Help, as I think any prudent Man need to desire as a Foundation for his Practice I have in a former Part own'd to Mr. *Howdy* that this was a Consideration we who have been Ordain'd since 1662, laid some stress upon; and if he'll but be at the pains to take the Method of Calculation propos'd, he'll find what will justify us in doing so: And what, at the same time, will justify our Fathers in Ordaining us, upon supposition the Power of Ordaining belong'd to their Ministerial Office, which I think I may be allow'd to take for granted, till what has been suggested to clear it, be fairly disprov'd. The other Argument taken from *the insufficiency of sundry of the Parish Ministers*, I shall not dilate upon, for fear of giving Offence; tho' I think it is so notorious, and so generally acknowledg'd, that some stress may justly be laid upon it.

*Reasons of
the Laity
for their
Noncon-
formity.*

“ Thus determining to continue in their Ministry, with satisfaction they were in the way
 “ and discharge of their Duty, they wanted not
 “ for hearers and adherents. Many Arguments
 “ and Insinuations indeed were used to divert
 “ the People from at all regarding these Ejected
 “ Ministers; but their Esteem for them was too
 “ deeply riveted; and the Grounds of their Dis-
 “ satisfaction too palpable, and the care taken to
 “ remove the Grounds of their Objections too
 “ superficial, for them to be much mov'd with
 “ their Assaults. Many of the People had found
 “ benefit by the Labours of these Ministers be-
 “ fore

fore they were Ejected, and thereupon thought
 themselves oblig'd to stick to them: Finding
 them cast off without having any suitable
 Crime alledg'd against them, they thought it
 inhumane and barbarous to desert them. Nay,
 being (some of them) convinc'd of the justice
 of the Cause they were engag'd in, *viz. The*
pressing a farther Reformation in Ecclesiastical
Matters, as necessary in order to the more gene-
ral reaching the great ends of Religion; they
 thought it their duty in their place to espouse
 the same Cause, and adhere to the same Prin-
 ciple, in opposition to those who reckon'd the
 Church so perfect as to need no amendments.
 And finding that it was the duty of their Mi-
 nisters, tho' silenc'd by the Magistrate, to con-
 tinue in the exercise of their Ministry, they
 were convinc'd they were oblig'd therein to
 support and encourage them. Neither could
 they forbear preferring the Labours of those
 Ministers, the suitability of whose Gifts,
 and whose readiness to watch for their Souls
 they had experienc'd, before others that came
 in their places, to whom they were strangers,
 and as to whom they were at the best in great
 uncertainty.

They could not see how the Presentation of
 a Patron, and the Institution of a Bishop,
 could make it the absolute duty of all in a
 Parish, presently to acquiesce in a Minister's
 conduct in holy things. This may indeed legally
 entitle him to the *Tithe and Maintenance*, but
 cannot make him a Pastor to any one without
 his own consent. Parish Order they thought
 had its advantages, and was to be preferr'd
 when more weighty Reasons did not offer.
 But they could not see any thing in it of an
 absolute necessity; neither could they recon-
 cile

“ cile the supposition of such a necessity, (tho’
 “ settled by the Law of the Land) with the in-
 “ violable Rights of humane Nature; which
 “ leave a Man as much at his liberty to choose
 “ * a Pastor for his Soul, as a Physician for his
 “ Body, or a Lawyer for his Estate. And there-
 “ fore, as they thought it would be hard for the
 “ Magistrate to say, You shall have this Physician
 “ or none, when perhaps another may better
 “ hit their particular Constitution; or, You
 “ shall have this Lawyer or none, when it may
 “ be they knew another who was much fitter to
 “ have the management of their Concerns: So
 “ did they also reckon it a straining the point
 “ too high, for the Civil Magistrate (and much
 “ more the Bishop) to say, You shall have this
 “ Man or none for your Pastor, when it was
 “ so very possible for them to know another
 “ Minister, who might be unexceptionable, and
 “ much more suitable to them, in the several
 “ respects in which a Minister’s help was need-

* This
 Principle
 only tend-
 ing to that
 Necessary
 Liberty,
 which is a
 Matter of
 Natural
 Right, in-
 fringes
 not the
 Right of
Patronage,
 which du-
 ly bound-
 ed, must
 be own’d
 to have its
 conveni-
 ences too.

For as Ministers or Bishops may judge who is fit to be by them Or-
 dain’d and let into the Ministry, so may Magistrates and Patrons
 judge and choose who of these Ministers shall have the Publick Places,
 Maintenance and Countenance, and yet People still keep their Right
 of choosing who shall be their Pastors. If the Patron offers an unfit
 Man, and the People refuse him he may offer others. If they conti-
 nue to disagree, the Matter is easily accommodated, by letting the
 Patron choose who shall have the Place and Tithes, and the People
 who shall be their Pastor. If they go to another Parish, the incon-
 venience is not great; if a Number of them join together in choosing
 a Pastor, living Peaceably and quietly, there is no Harm in it. The
 Patron has his Right in presenting the Person that hath the Publick
 Maintenance. The Parish Minister hath his Right; for he hath
 what Publick Maintenance is legally fixt to the Living; which is as
 much as the Bishop’s Institution, and Patron’s Presentation could en-
 title him to. And at the same time also the People have their Right,
 which is, paying the Tythe legally due to the Parish Minister, to
 choose whom they will for their Pastor, without injuring Bishop, Pa-
 tron, Minister, or any one else.

ful to them. This appear'd to them to be a contending with them for a Right which God and Nature had given them; and therefore they were for seeing good reason for it before they would part with it. *

Many of them apprehended that the Method of the National Establishment broke in upon Oeconomical Government. The Master of a Family is an emblem of a Prince in the State. Some branches of his Power and Authority are evidently superiour. The Parental Authority, is the greatest that Nature gives. We may suppose it to reach a great way, when we consider it is design'd to supply the place of Reason; whereas in the exercise of a Prince's Authority, he is suppos'd to have Subjects, that use their Reason, and must be dealt with accordingly. Now in any thing like an Imposition of a Pastor upon them, the Dissenting Laity apprehended their Right as Parents, and Husbands, and Masters, &c. was invaded either by Prince or Bishop, that pretended to impose a Pastor, upon those who by God and Nature were put under their Care. Whose Interest and Power in my Family, and with Reference to my Wife and Children, can be suppos'd earlier and greater than mine? And who more concern'd in the Instruction they receive than I? Why then should I let another impose a Pastor upon them, which more belongs to me certainly than to any one else, if they are not competent Judges for themselves: But if it become not even me, (and could not be justify'd) for me to tell my Wife or Children that are come to Years of Discretion, you shall have this Man for your Minister or none; you shall either Worship God here or no where; How can the Magi-

*Baxter's
Nonconformity
stated and
argu'd,
p. 163.

strate

“strate have such an Authority? How can
 “the Bishop by it? If neither Prince nor Bishop
 “may choofe for my Children, a Tutor, a Trade,
 “a Physician, or Dyet, or Cloathing, or impofe
 “Husbands or Wives on them, without my con-
 “fent: How fould either of them come by a
 “Right to impofe a Minifter upon them, with-
 “out my Will and Choice? Efppecially when his
 “Management of Holy Things is a Matter of
 “fuch vaft Importtance, and wherein their Sal-
 “vation and my Intereft are fo nearly con-
 “cern’d? The infufficient Answers ufually re-
 “turn’d to fuch Querys, confirm’d many of
 “the Laity in their Inclination to Nonconfor-
 “mity*.

* *Id. Ibid.*
 p. 169.

“The Want of *Discipline* in the Church, was
 “another confiderable Plea they urg’d. And
 “in this they but follow’d the Old *Puritans*,
 “and their Pious Progenitors, who have in
 “this refpect been calling for greater care and
 “ftrictnefs, ever fince the Reformation of the
 “Church and Land from Popery. Upon Search
 “they found that God had design’d the Church
 “to be as it were the Porch of Heaven: A So-
 “ciety gather’d out of the World, fannctified to
 “him, and to be more fully prepar’d for Glo-
 “ry. And therefore he would have none in it,
 “but fuch as profefs Faith and Love and Holi-
 “nefs, and renounce a Flefhly and Sensual,
 “Worldly and Profane Life; that the Paftors
 “were to judge who were to be taken in, and
 “who caft out; and all the Members in their
 “Places bound to preferve their own Purity,
 “and that of the Society which they belong to.
 “The National Conftitution appear’d to them
 “to be Calculated to another Design. The ig-
 “norant, ungodly Multitude are forc’d into
 “Communion while palpably unfit: Thefe be
 “come

“ come the strength and major part ; and are op-
 “ posite to this Discipline, because it would re-
 “ strain and curb them ; and tho’ it could not
 “ better their Hearts, would yet oblige them
 “ in many respects to amend their Carriage.
 “ The Ministers are incapable of doing any
 “ thing towards it, the power being wrested
 “ from them ; which power, in its execution, is
 “ lodg’d in hands that manage it carelessly and
 “ prophanely ; to the screening of such as should
 “ be censured, and the censuring of such pious
 “ Persons as ought to be encourag’d. This was
 “ what the old *Puritans* groan’d under ; and yet
 “ they were against a Separation, as long as there
 “ was any hope of amendment ; but finding the
 “ stiffness of the Bishops, and their Adherents,
 “ after King *Charles’s* Restauration, in sticking
 “ to their old Methods without any alteration ;
 “ nay, finding the same Disposition at the be-
 “ ginning of King *William* and Queen *Mary’s*
 “ Reign, when they were so urgently press’d to
 “ make good their Promises made under their
 “ foregoing Distress and Fears ; that they still
 “ applauded their Constitution as so compleat
 “ and perfect, as that it needed no amendments ;
 “ they saw no ground of hope remaining that
 “ ever any such thing as a regular Discipline
 “ would willingly and out of choice be brought
 “ in, nay not tho’ the better sort of Governors
 “ in the Church were for it. And therefore
 “ they apprehended themselves obliged publicly
 “ to bear their Testimony against that fatal Neg-
 “ lect ; and that the rather, because they found
 “ that Neglect acknowledg’d even in the Com-
 “ mon-Prayer-Book, notwithstanding there has
 “ been no provision made of suitable remedy.
 “ For at the beginning of the *Communion*,
 “ there is this Confession : *That in the primitive*
 “ Church

“ Church there was a *GODLY DISCIPLINE* ; such
 “ Persons as were notorious Sinners being put to open
 “ Penance , and punish’d in this World, that their
 “ Souls might be saved in the day of the Lord :
 “ And that others admonish’d by their example,
 “ might be the more afraid to offend. And that in-
 “ stead thereof, until the said Discipline may be
 “ restor’d again, which thing is much to be
 “ wish’d, it’s thought good the general sentences of
 “ God’s Cursing against impenitent Sinners should be
 “ read, &c. They apprehended therefore, that even
 “ the Common-Prayer-Book it self, (tho’ in this
 “ respect it did but set up the Shadow instead
 “ of the Substance) justify’d their insisting upon
 “ the Restauration of that *Discipline*, which it
 “ own’d to be lost, and the recovery of which it
 “ represented as a thing highly desirable. And
 “ they thought that the inserting this Confession
 “ and Wish was a plain evidence, that the first
 “ Compilers of the *Common-Prayer* intended a
 “ farther Progress, and a fuller Reformation
 “ than those who came after them would give
 “ way to : And that the yearly repetition of
 “ this Confession and Wish in the publick Church-
 “ es, was a plain and publick condemning
 “ themselves for stopping short ; and crying up
 “ that as Perfect, which they who were the first
 “ managers of it, were so modest as to own to
 “ have been Defective.

Id. Ibid.
 p. 176.

“ Many of the Laity were also afraid of sin-
 “ ning in baptizing their Children with *God-*
 “ *fathers and Godmothers*. They were ready to
 “ devote their Infants to God by Baptism, in
 “ the way that he had appointed ; and to pro-
 “ mise to train them up in his fear : But this
 “ would not do. Now they durst not put others
 “ upon covenanting for their Children, with
 “ whom they had no concern ; or desire them

“ (with

“ (with an appearing Solemnity) to promise
 “ what they knew they meant not to perform ;
 “ or make Promises, which their Children, when
 “ they grew up, would not be bound or ob-
 “ lig’d by : They thought their Childrens right
 “ to Baptism depended upon *their* Interest in the
 “ divine Covenant, and property in their Chil-
 “ dren ; and thought the bringing in middle
 “ Persons, who were to be substituted in their
 “ room, was affixing the Ordinance upon a
 “ false bottom. And whereas some (who were
 “ for putting on the appearance of Moderation)
 “ would tell them, that they might, if they in-
 “ sisted upon it, be allow’d to give up their
 “ own Children, they thought it could not fair-
 “ ly be reconcil’d with the Constitution, when
 “ they found it so positively declar’d by the
 “ whole Convocation in 1603, in their 29th
 “ Canon, *That no Parent shall be urged to be pre-
 “ sent, nor be admitted to answer as Godfather for
 “ his own Child.* And therefore finding their
 “ Children so peremptorily excluded from Bap-
 “ tism, without an humane addition, which they
 “ could not understand, and were uneasie under,
 “ they thought themselves at liberty to make
 “ their application to such Ministers to baptize
 “ their Children as were free to do it, with-
 “ out any such needless or dissatisfying imposi-
 “ tion.

Id. Ibid.
 p. 18.

“ Withal, many of them had Baptism refus’d
 “ their Children, unless they’d submit to the
 “ *sign of the Cross.* This they esteem’d an un-
 “ warrantable addition to Christ’s Institution.
 “ They were afraid of encouraging Church
 “ Corruptions, by yielding to it. They knew
 “ no right the Church had to make new Terms
 “ of Communion, or require their submission
 “ to such an humane Invention ; and therefore

“ they left those who would rather leave their
 “ Children without the Seal of the Covenant,
 “ than admit them to it without such an unpro-
 “ fitable Ceremony; and adher’d to those who
 “ were ready to admit their Infants into the
 “ visible Church of Christ upon his own
 “ terms.

Id. Ibid.
 p. 187.

“ As for *Kneeling at the Communion*, some of
 “ the Laity question’d the lawfulness of it; and
 “ while they did so, durst not yield to it for
 “ fear of injuring their Consciences. And yet
 “ knowing it to be a great Sin to live in the total
 “ neglect of that holy Ordinance, they appre-
 “ hended it their duty to join in with those, of
 “ whom they might receive it in a Table posture.
 “ Others, not apprehending kneeling at this Or-
 “ dinance a thing in it self unlawful, could (to
 “ testify as much, and to shew their Charity to
 “ the establish’d Church under all its Corrup-
 “ tions) sometimes yield to receive in that
 “ way, who yet could not be satisfy’d to do it
 “ constantly, lest they should be chargeable with
 “ not bearing their Testimony against terms of
 “ Communion of humane Invention, which they
 “ esteem’d a great Duty.

Id. Ibid.
 p. 193.

“ And it also much prejudic’d many under-
 “ standing Persons against the Church Party, to
 “ find Oaths made so light of, and to observe a
 “ greater stress so commonly laid upon their
 “ Ceremonies, than upon Knowledge, or Faith,
 “ or real Holiness: They found themselves
 “ wretchedly hamper’d and ensnar’d by Fetters
 “ of the Clergy’s making. If they were intrust-
 “ ed in any Corporations, they must for a long
 “ time be forc’d to swear that there was no ob-
 “ ligation at all from the Oath, call’d, *The so-*
 “ *lemn League and Covenant*, either on them or
 “ any other. This seem’d to them a proclaim-
 “ ing

“ ing of Perjury lawful, as to that part of the
 “ Covenant which was unquestionably lawful;
 “ as the renouncing of Schism, Popery, Pro-
 “ faneness, &c. They were sadly pester’d with
 “ the *Corporation Act*, the *Vestry Act*, the *Oxford*
 “ *Act*, the *Militia Act*, (which were all framed
 “ by the ruling Clergy and their Patrons) where-
 “ by an Oath was impos’d upon them not to
 “ endeavour any alteration of Government in
 “ the Church; to bind them to rest contented
 “ with what they could not but esteem corrupt:
 “ And they must also swear an abhorrence of
 “ taking Arms against any commissioned by the
 “ King, which they knew not but in time they
 “ might be oblig’d to, by his breaking the origi-
 “ nal Contract with his People, which was af-
 “ terwards actually found to be our case. Mul-
 “ tiple’d Burthens of this nature made the Cler-
 “ gy esteem’d rigid Taskmasters. And when
 “ there was any effort made for relief, to hear it
 “ become the common cry, *O the Church! The*
 “ *Church is in danger!* As if the whole Taber-
 “ nacle totter’d upon the touching of the least
 “ Pin: And at the same time observing that
 “ they who could not bate an ace in the Ceremo-
 “ nial part, were yet ready enough, many
 “ times, to make considerable abatements in those
 “ things in which lies the main of real Reli-
 “ gion; and that they who were so fond of their
 “ Constitution, had so little Charity left for
 “ those whose Sentiments differ’d from theirs,
 “ and were ready to question the Validity of
 “ their Ministry and Ordinances, nay and even
 “ the possibility of their Salvation, if they que-
 “ stion’d but the *Jus Divinum* of Bishops: Such
 “ Observations as these made many of the Laity
 “ think, that there was no small danger of en-
 “ couraging them in their Rigours and assuming

“ Pretensions, by an adherence and submission to
 “ them.

p. 73.

Mr. Hoadly says * he will address to the Ministers, what he has to say under this Head; which comes much to one as if he had Address'd it to the People: For so their Difficultys be but solv'd, it matters not to whom the solution is Directed. But it seems this Hint gave such an Occasion for a Charge on these Ministers, as must not be overlookd. They do all the Mischief, while the Poor People are comparatively innocent. The Ministers he says are the *Chief Maintainers of the Seperation*: Which I deny, and Assert on the Contrary, that the *Chief Maintainers of the Seperation*, are they that Continue to deprive the People of their undoubted Rights: Well, but these Ministers have *pleaded the Cause of the People*; and if so, I think they are the more oblig'd to them for Vindicating them in the Possession of those Rights which others have invaded: they have *put these Arguments into their Mouths*; which is more Easily Asserted than prov'd. On the Contrary, I am Satisfi'd, that some of these Arguments have been so strenuously plead-ed on their own behalf by the People, as has not a little contributed, upon Occasion, to the Conviction of their Ministers. But he goes on: You (says he to these Ministers) *have furnish'd them with their Objections against Conformity, and kept up their Prejudices against the Church of England*, That they have taught them to make the sacred Scriptures the standard of Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline; and to disown any Authority of Imposing in Divine Things, which the Word of God will not warrant, is really true; and if this has furnisht the People with *Objections against Confor-*
mity

mity, and Prejudices against the Church of England, 'tis a sign the Conformity which the *Church of England* requires, has not much footing in the Word of God. 'Tis added, *You have a very great Interest with them;* much to some mens sorrow I am well assur'd, who would willingly have none listen'd to but themselves. *And a very great Authority and Influence over them;* But not to that degree, Sir, as your Church pretends to, which insists upon complying with troublesome Injunctions, that are liable to sundry Objections, without enquiring into the Reasons of them. *And consequently as you have been their Guides and Supports in their Departure from us, viz. when you of the Church of England drove them away, as unfit for Communion, because they could not think, and speak and act entirely according to your Fancy: So you may upon maturer Consideration, prove successful and happy Instruments in the uniting them to us again, to the Glory of God, and the encrease of Peace and Love amongst us.* If hereby you mean, that upon maturer Consideration they may perswade them to own an Ecclesiastical Authority, which the Scripture does not warrant, and which they have in their own Case declar'd they can't themselves own with a safe Conscience, you suppose them to be Men of very loose Principles, which a pretending to regard *the glory of God, and Peace, and Love,* will never atone for. The Ejected Ministers Sir have labour'd hard in the Cause of *Peace and Love;* but as for Union with the *Church of England,* in Forms and Ceremonies, they must act very unaccountably in pressing it, as long as they apprehended it would be to the Damage of Real Religion, which was their fixed Judgment. However, I'll grant, that some of the *Arguments offer'd for the People, do belong in common to*

them and their Ministers ; and therefore if Mr. Hoadly will apply himself here also to the Ministers, I have nothing to say against it, provided he will but observe, that supposing the Ecclesiastical Impositions do really deprive these People of their undoubted Rights, they are not bound to renounce them, even tho' their Ministers should not stand up in their Defence : and that they are as much oblig'd to take their Measures from the Word of God, follow their Consciences, and act agreeably to the best Light they have, even as their Ministers.

p. 81.

It was Pleaded by many of the People, that they had receiv'd considerable Benefit by the Labours of the Ministers who were Ejected. They had had much of the Presence of God under their Ministrations ; they had found their Gifts suitable to them, and adapted to do good among them ; and had experienc'd their readiness to watch for their Souls ; and therefore were not free to forsake them, and adhere to those who came in their places, as to whom they had not a like Prospect. *This Argument*, Mr. Hoadly says, *is produc'd to little purpose, unless to make up the number.* I Answer, it is produc'd in order to the Justification of those who were in the Case that is here represented. And it is not an easie thing to prove it would not justify them in the sight of God. How little does it signify to plead, *that the*

p. 82.

Ejected Ministers did not confine themselves to the very places whence they were Ejected? How could they, when the Five Mile Act, with so much Severity drove them away from thence? And what if some *Among the Dissenters have* upon Occasion forsook their Pastors on the account of little Differences or groundless Dissatisfaction? and what if they have been herein to blame? does it therefore follow, that they who adher'd to their former

mer Pastors on the Account of the Benefit, they receiv'd under their Ministry, rather than they would follow those that were obtruded on them in their room, sinn'd in so doing? And what if the People *don't express the least readiness to conform to the Church of England, any more after the Departure or Death of their Ejected Minister than before?* Does it therefore follow they were bound to have left their Ejected Minister under whom they had considerably profited, while the Providence of God continu'd him among them, and to have adher'd to one that came in his room, under whom they could find no reason for a like Expectation? But the Gentleman's arguing in this and some other places, looks as if he apprehended it necessary for the People who adher'd to the Ejected Ministers, upon their Removal or Death, to fall in with the Establish'd Church, in order to the evidencing they were sincere in their separating upon such Reasons as were alledg'd, which to me appears an odd Fancy, and yet this is the natural Language of his next Query. *When do we find any of them that are not more ready, at such a time, to trust the care of their Souls with Dissenting Pastors, to whom they are strangers, and as to whom they are at best in great uncertainty, than to return to the Communion of the Establish'd Church?* But how does this affect the Argument propos'd? Alas! Sir, Most of the People whom you here refer to, never were of the *Establish'd Church*, and therefore can't be said to return to it. And tho' when their former Pastors dy'd, or were forc'd from them, the Argument drawn from the Personal Benefit they receiv'd under their Ministry ceas'd, yet it does not follow, but there might be other binding Reasons that should oblige them rather to choose other Pastors for themselves, than to acquiesce in

the Legal Provision? and these Reasons come afterwards to be consider'd. Had I been living, and a Private Person in 1662, and been under a Pious Minister, by whose Labours I had considerably profited, and found him turn'd out, and his Place either unsupply'd, or so ill supply'd, as that I could discern little reason to hope for due Ministerial Assistance in my way to Heaven, I should have thought, I might safely have adher'd to my former Pastor for this Reason: Even tho' I should yield, that other Considerations were necessary to justify my joining in the choice of another Minister after the Death of my former Pastor, upon supposition, that he that came in his room, was really a well-qualify'd, sober and Pious Man. *This Argument*, says Mr. Hoadly, *can be of little use as to the present state of the Cause.* It is in the first place to be consider'd, whether it would justify the People in 1662, for adhering to their Ejected Pastors. That was what they apprehended, where the Case was stated, as is represented; and I must confess, I agree with them in that Apprehension, and can't find any thing material alledg'd, to disprove it. It is but of a secondary Consideration, how far this Argument may be of *use as to the present state of the Cause*; tho' even there it may thus far have its weight; that upon supposition any Persons have found the Ministry of the *Dissenters* remarkably bless'd of God, to their Sanctification and Edification, I can't see how they can forsake such Ministers, for others, whose Ignorance or Immorality would leave no room for any such Hopes or Expectations; and there are other things also that offer, under the following Arguments, that deserve to be well consider'd— *But*, says Mr. Hoadly, *Its plain the People think not themselves oblig'd in Conscience constantly to attend upon the Ministry*

nistry of that Person, from whom they have once receiv'd Benefit. I answer, It is not necessary they should; for it is no impossible thing, for People to receive Benefit by one, who may afterwards fall so foully, as that it would be scandalous to attend any longer upon his Ministry. That alone may be a just reason, that may vacate any Obligation to a Constant Attendance on the Ministry of a Person, from whom they have once receiv'd Benefit: And it would be the like, suppose he is remov'd from them by a clear Providential Call; or they from him. But supposing this, it by no means follows, that People ought not to prefer the Ministry of one from whom they have receiv'd Benefit, to the Ministry of another, from whom they have no reason for a like Expectation, where Providence gives them a Choice. *It is plain, he says, That many Considerations of lesser Moment than the Peace and Unity of the Church, do induce them to leave a Pastor who hath been useful to them, and attend upon one to whom they are strangers.* I can't tell but this may sometimes be true. If a Man that has considerably profited under the Minister of any particular place, can no longer continue conveniently in that place; but has the Prospect of following his worldly Business, and supporting his Family to better advantage elsewhere, I can't tell, but it may, in some Cases be his Duty, upon that Consideration, to remove, tho' in so doing he is forc'd to leave his former Pastor, and attend upon one, to whom he was comparatively a stranger; making as good a Choice as he can for himself under this Change. *This is a Consideration, I grant, of lesser Moment than the Peace and Unity of the Church, and yet it does not follow, that even Peace and Unity, (especially when an Agreement in Niceties and Formalities has that Name given it) could*

justify any Men in hazarding their Souls, as they must have done in many Cases, had they in 1662 left their former Pastors for those who succeeded them.

And when he adds farther, *It is plain, if this Argument were wholly wanting, there would not be a Dissenter the less in England*, he must give me leave to be of another mind. For I am well assur'd there had been very few Dissenters in England, if this Argument had been wholly wanting. For let words be multiply'd ever so long, 'twas the Benefit the People apprehended (at least) they had receiv'd by their Attendance on the Ejected Ministers that engag'd them to adhere to them in 1662. It is the same is the Reason at this Day, with those that Act upon a Principle in adhering to their successors: And if this comes to fail, I shall not wonder if the Number of the Dissenters considerably decreases, and they come to nothing. But till then, there is no great danger, unless we should be so happy as to fix on such a Basis as to leave no room for a Rational stated Dissent. Why therefore he should say *it's plain that the Argument is weak, and of no great Account in the judgment of our People themselves*, I cannot see: When it is the Apprehension of Benefit, by which those who Acted upon a Principle were really sway'd both formerly and lately, in adhering to the silenc'd Ministers, and those who succeed them. At least when this is solemnly profess'd by Persons that have all the Appearance as can be desir'd of being sober and Conscientious, I can't see how Consistently with Charity, it can be call'd in question.

But let's see his Contrary Argument. It runs thus; *If the People do not judge themselves oblig'd in Conscience never to forsake that*
Teacher,

Teacher, the Benefit of whose Labours, and Suitableness of whose Gifts they have experienc'd, they could not be oblig'd in Conscience to stick to their own Ejected Ministers. Which is as if a Man should have apply'd himself to the honest People of *Taunton*, who had so great a Respect (and that so deservedly) for *Mr. Joseph Allein*, and made a Speech to them to this purpose: Truly Friends, if your Consciences will ever let you forsake your Teacher, the Benefit of whose Labours, and Suitableness of whose Gifts you have experienc'd; if you can do it when he's forcibly separated from you many Miles; if your Conscience can let you leave him, when he lies stifling in a Prison for your sakes; then truly you can't be oblig'd in Conscience to stick to him at all. Would they not readily in such a Case have Answer'd: If he is forcibly separated from us we can't help it: But as long as we can have any opportunity of attending on the Ministrations of one under whom we have found so much of the presence of God, we think our selves bound in Conscience to embrace it. I must needs own I think the Answer had been abundantly sufficient.

He goes on: *Much less are they oblig'd in Conscience to joyn themselves to others, whose Abilities are unknown to them, in opposition to the Church of England.* I answer, when the Church of England so miserably treated their Worthy Preacher whom I nam'd before, there was very little reason to expect the Honest People of that Town who had a peculiar Veneration for him, should fall in with the Publick Establishment that encourag'd such severity, towards Persons so Eminent for their Piety and Usefulness. And withal, suppose they had so far study'd the Controversy; as to be convinc'd it was their Duty to bear Witness against those Impositions

positions which were supported by the Establishment, they might be obliged in Conscience to joyn themselves to other Ministers, when those under whom they had formerly profited were remov'd from them by Imprisonment or Death; and that even tho' their Abilities were unknown to them, Comparatively to those of their former Ministers: while yet they might have such Trial of them as might be sufficient to their Satisfaction. When then he says *this is the Constant Practice* of the Dissenters upon the Death or Departure of their Old Pastor; I don't see that what he charges them with is at all blame worthy; or inconsistent with this Argument. For they might very well prefer being under their former Pastors, under whom they had profited, to the coming under the Conduct of Strangers, when they had their choice; and yet might choose, those who before were comparatively strangers to them, when there was no possibility of enjoying their former Pastors any Longer. But he asks, *whom of Your Laity will this Argument vindicate?* I answer all those among the People in 1662 who adher'd to their former Pastors, tho' Legally Ejected, upon the Account of the Benefit they had receiv'd under their Ministry: And the Posterity also of those People who have been train'd up under the Ministry of these ejected Ministers and their Successors, as far as they are really influenc'd by the benefit they have receiv'd in their adhering to them. If he thinks *this Argument wants the force we suppose to be in it*, it is either because he does not take it rightly, or won't allow a due stress to be laid on the beneficialness of a Ministry to the Souls of the People concern'd. For our part, we don't (as far as I can perceive) *apply it to a practice not agreeable to our Representation*; we only hold it to be of force where the case is as it is represented, *i. e.* where

Persons,

Persons, who are competent Judges, apprehend real spiritual Benefit, which is the best argument in the World for adherence to any Ministry. And tho' it is very possible it may be abus'd, yet that is no argument it is not of considerable force, where the Benefit is real. But that which he seems to lay most stress upon, is this; *That if any Considerations can be of force enough to induce a Man to leave one Pastor, and go over to another, (tho' he have profited by the one heretofore, and knows little of the other) certainly the consideration of Peace and Love are of all the most forcible, and may be suppos'd, more than any others, to discharge him from his great obligation to attend for ever upon the Ministry of one Person who hath been useful to him.*

I answer, *Peace and Love*, without doubt, are much to be consider'd as they lie in the temper of the Mind, but not so much always as the complying with such or such Formalities is made the indication of a peaceable and loving Temper, which may be maintain'd without it. In the former sense there is no inconsistency between *Peace and Love*, and the adhering to an ejected Minister, whose Labours have been found profitable. A Man might do so, and yet have all that Peaceableness and Love in his Breast towards those who attended on the new Minister then sent by the Government, as the Word of God requires. And I doubt not but it was so in the case of many of the Dissenters. And for my part I must declare, I cannot see, that *Peace and Love* were any thing near so much concern'd on the side of those who were depriv'd of their useful Pastors, as this Representation supposes and takes for granted. To illustrate the matter I'll make a parallel Supposition. Let us suppose that in this Nation, for some time, all had been left to their liberty to choose what Physician they pleas'd

pleas'd to have the care of their Bodies ; and on a sudden a Law is made, That all the People, under great Penalties, shall be contented with those Physicians that the State provided for them. If the People had before receiv'd real benefit from their own Physicians, I can't see they were oblig'd to leave them for the Physicians of the State. It might justly contribute much to their satisfaction, that the Physicians they had been used to were acquainted with their Constitution, and so knew how to suit their Prescriptions accordingly, and they had found success under them ; and therefore they would act but rationally in determining to adhere to them. Let it be urg'd on these Persons, *That they can leave their old Physicians, in some cases, and have often changed ; and therefore, why should not they do it in compliance with Authority ?* It were easie for them to answer, *That tho' they can't tell how they could be debarr'd of a liberty of leaving them for others, when they had real reason for a change ; yet that the benefit they had receiv'd from them was sufficient reason to keep them from changing, while they had not a like prospect in the case of those into whose hands they were to put themselves. And supposing it farther urg'd, That if any Considerations could be of force enough to induce a Man to leave one Physician and go over to another, tho' he had profited by the one, and knew little of the other, the consideration of Peace and Love ought to be of all the most forceable, &c.* They might safely reply, *That they who made a compliance with the Will, nay the Humour of others, in such things as these, necessary to the maintaining Peace and Love, left Inferiours at the mercy of their Superiours, to the hazard not only of their Liberty, but their Safety too. The like also may be said in the case of Ministers.* *Peace and Love*

is no stronger an Argument in one case than the other ; nay it is really the weaker, by how much the welfare of the Soul is more to be regarded than the health of the Body. And when Mr. *Hoadly* adds, That an ejected Minister might, tho' silenc'd, *still be useful* among his People *in a more private way* ; he seems to have forgotten what care was taken, by the *Oxford Act* to prevent it.

It having been said, That the People could not forbear preferring the Labours of those Ministers, the suitableness of whose Gifts, and whose readiness to watch for their Souls, they had experienc'd, before others that came in their places, to whom they were strangers, and as to whom they were at the best in great uncertainty : He mightily harps upon this, That the establish'd Ministers that came in the room of their former Pastors, are represented as strangers to the People, about whom they were at great uncertainty: He says, *They might still be secure in their constant attendance upon the publick Worship in the establish'd Church ; that they should meet with a Service fitted for the worship of God, and their own Edification.* Which is what many of them were far from being satisfy'd in ; besides that, sundry of them were left destitute of any Ministry at all, there being none for some time sent in the places of those who were Ejected. And tho' he says, *This* (of the publick Liturgy or Service) *is all we are concern'd about*, yet he must allow me to say, That these honest People were concern'd about many other things besides the publick addressing themselves to God in Prayer : They thought it became them to be earnestly concern'd about their being instructed from time to time in sound Doctrine, and that suited to their different Circumstances ; and directed in all the several parts of the divine Life ; about their
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being

being faithfully admonish'd of their Duty and Danger, as need requir'd; about their having the purity of divine Institutions kept up among them; and about their having a good Example from their Ministers to lead them in the way to Heaven, as well as good Instructions, and the like.

p. 85. He adds, *There is this advantage in the establish'd way, that a Man need not be a stranger to the main part of the publick Worship, nor in the least uncertainty as to that.* Nor indeed could they be strangers to the whole of the publick Worship, as manag'd by their Ministers, under whose Labours they had sate with delight and profit. But if in this respect there was any advantage on the side of the Establishment, by reason of the *stated Liturgy*, it was an advantage that was more than outweigh'd by the observable Defectiveness, disorderly Repetitions, and obnoxious Expressions of the Liturgy; as to which, no relief could be obtain'd after the most serious Complaints: And by the *uncertainty* they were in as to the Doctrine, that would be instill'd into them by a new set of Ministers, who in complaisance to those that gave them their places, were more likely, many of them, to set themselves to undoe what their former Ministers had been doing, than to carry on the same Work among them. But his brief Representation of this matter in the close, is (as he says in another case) *rather Banter than Argument.* For they did not argue barely from their being *strangers* to the Ministers they were requir'd to sit under, but from the benefit receiv'd under their former Ministers; which being suppos'd, their being strangers to those that were to come in their room, only heighten'd the Argument. For tho' more might be said in many particular cases, yet, I must confess, to me it appear'd enough to justify their laying stress

on the benefit they had receiv'd from their former Ministers, that they found not reason to expect the like in the case of those that came in their places, which was what was intended in an inoffensive way to be intimated when it was said, *They were strangers to them, and at uncertainty about them.*

In short, if profiting by Ministers be an argument for adhering to them, rather than others under whom they could not reasonably expect a like profiting, then had many of the People a very good argument for adhering to their ejected Pastors: And this is what I can't see Mr. *Hoadly* has disprov'd. And if it was a good argument in their case, 'tis so also where any have been bred up under these ejected Ministers and their Successors, and found like benefit.

Another Argument used by the People in defence of their adherence to their ancient Ministers, was this; That they were cast off *without any suitable Crime alledg'd against them.* And this was an Argument, which I have been personally inform'd by several, they laid great stress upon. To this he answers: *You your selves would have some Establishment, nay and such an Establishment as would inevitably exclude some Persons, and such as you may think useful and laborious.* I answer, Some were really for an *Establishment*, and others not: But there were but few among them (as far as I can discern) that were for such an Establishment, as should have excluded any well qualify'd, useful and laborious Ministers from *all capacity of publick Service.* Or if there were any that were so stinted by a regard to a Party, I have nothing to plead in their vindication or excuse: But I am satisfy'd they were not many. To proceed then: *You would (says he) have Terms, and some Conditions impos'd, by which all who come*

p. 86.

into the Establishment should be oblig'd. Undoubtedly ; all that were for an Establishment, must be for limiting an admission into the Ministry under that Establishment, to certain Terms and Conditions ; But the more General and the more Scriptural those Terms and Conditions were, 'tis plain the Establishment would be the more safe and lasting. But says he, *Who shall be Judges what Terms are proper ? Shall not the Governors in Church and State ? Is it not their Province ? And must not they give an account to God for it ?* There is in this case a double Judgment to be allow'd for. A judgment what Terms are proper to fix in the Establishment ; and a judgment how far the Terms that are fix'd by the Establishment, may warrantably and safely be comply'd with. If the former judgment belongs to Superiors, it does not follow that it must break in upon the latter, to which Inferiors have a Right in sacred matters ; as to which they are as much under the government of Conscience, directed by the Word of God, in their lower Capacity, as Superiors in their higher Sphere. And as the one is accountable to God for the Terms fix'd ; so are the other for their compliance or non-compliance with those Terms. But I cannot but take notice, that Mr. *Hoadly* here brings in the *Governors in Church and State*, as having a joint-right to judge what Terms are proper ; whereas he elsewhere seems to appropriate it to the Governors of the Church ; and tells us, if such Terms are fix'd as silence a number of worthy Ministers, he lays little stress upon the *Authority of the Civil Magistrate*. Here, however, he thinks it safest to join both together ; and I shall only refer him to the *Introduction* to my 2d Part for my sense in this matter. When he asks, *If there be some Persons who cannot come into the Ministry,*

Ministry, or remain in the publick exercise of it upon these Terms, Can this be remedy'd? I answer, The excluding a considerable number of well qualify'd useful Persons out of the Establishment, might easily be *remedy'd*, by making the publick Terms large and wide; and the excluding those from all capacity of publick Service in the Ministry, who can't be satisfy'd to come into the Constitution, tho' fix'd with a considerable latitude, is easily *remediable* by a Toleration. Let the Terms be such as few will except against, and the Establishment will shut out but few; and let there be a Toleration for those few, and all are easie. But, says he, *Must these Persons presently begin and encourage the Division of the Nation, and set up Churches against the establish'd Church?* I answer; If the Establishment shall make things disputable the Terms of admission, and so put a force in matters that God hath left absolutely indifferent, no other can be expected, than that many should refuse compliance: And if Severity must be used towards those that can't comply, the Division is heighten'd instead of being prevented: And if Severity must not be used, there ought to be a Toleration. And if every sober Man, by whose Principles and Practices the Civil Peace is not endanger'd, has a right to such a Toleration; then if the establish'd Church is of too narrow a compass to satisfie the Consciences of any number, they may set up different Churches, without any impeachment. And if there be any ill Consequences hence arising, they'll be plainly chargeable on the narrowness of the Establishment. And tho' Mr. *Hoadly* thinks *this is not easily to be affirm'd*, he must give others leave to think, that if he had read and consider'd the celebrated Letters concerning Toleration, he'd find, that the contrary could not easily be de-

fended. He brings the matter down to 1662, which is the right way to judge. *You would* (says he) *at that very time have had some Terms impos'd upon such as should continue in their Parish Ministry.* What the Ministers would then have chosen is one thing; what they might have submitted to, is another. They would have chosen to have had no Terms impos'd upon such as should have continu'd in their Parish Ministry, that would have excluded well qualify'd and useful Persons. This, as far as I can judge, had been compass'd, had their reasonable desire been gratify'd, when they begg'd that there might be *Unity in things necessary, Liberty in things indifferent, and Charity in all.* But tho' this was their great desire, they could yet generally speaking, have come into the Establishment, had King Charles his Declaration pass't into a Law. *Supposing this* (says he) *and that the Terms had been what would have contented you, you cannot imagine but that for all this many a Man had been Ejected.* I Answer, Suppose some few had still been ejected, it had certainly been much better, to have had a few Scores in that Condition, than so many Hundreds as really were Silenc'd by the Methods taken. Aye, But says Mr. Hoadly, *For ought I can judge, the number of such might have come but little short of what it is represented now to be.* What he may found his Judgment upon I cannot say, because he has not tho't fit to inform us. But they who were the Commissioners on the side of those who were afterwards Ejected (who must be allow'd as competent Judges as he can pretend to be) were generally of another Mind, And the Thanks of the City Ministers for that Royal Declaration, with the concurring eager desires of the Body of the Ministers through the Kingdom to have the Declaration confirm'd by Act of Parliament,

ment, plainly intimated the contrary. And as for those that were so zealous for the Royal Supremacy in Causes Ecclesiastical, I can't see how any of them could consistently with their Principle have left their Livings, had that Declaration become a Law, even tho' their beloved Ceremonies had been left in their natural Indifference. So that the Number of the Ejected, upon this Supposition, must necessarily have been very small. To go on then with Mr. *Hoadly*; I would ask (says he) *whether would have been better, and more reasonable, all things consider'd, that the People should have united with their Parish Ministers, or with these Ejected Persons.* I Answer, Suppose the Terms had been widen'd to the Compass allow'd by that Declaration, I am perswaded the number of the Ejected had been so small and inconsiderable, as that few Parish Ministers would have wanted for Auditors: But if any of the People apprehended that it would be more for their Edification to adhere to the few ejected Ministers, by whom they had profited, than to those that came in their room, I should not be the Person that would pretend to condemn them.

When he farther asks, *Whether the People should have been esteem'd barbarous and inhumane, if they had deserted these Ministers (who were ejected out of an Establishment pursuant to the Declaration foremention'd) and seriously attended upon the Publick Worship in their Parish Churches?* I Answer, Where any among the People apprehended that those few who were Ejected, did rather quit their Livings and Livelihoods, than they would betray the spiritual Rights of those who were under their Pastoral Care, and they were perswaded those were their real Rights which these Persons thus defended, I can't see but it may very safely be said, they had been *barbarous*

and *inhumane* had they deserted them. And to his last Query, *Whether it might not have been the Duty of the People to leave them, tho' they were ejected without having any suitable Crime alledg'd against them?* I Answer, No; For, if they had formerly profited under these Ministers, who were then ejected, and found them expos'd to Hardships for defending what they apprehended the Real Rights of the People; their not having any suitable Crime alledg'd against them, why they should be excluded all capacity of Publick Service, (tho' they were shut out of the Establishment) was an Additional Evidence, that it was their Duty to adhere to them.

'Tis easily to be *observ'd* that the Stress of Mr. Hoadly lies here, that if at that time some Terms might be impos'd very lawfully, nay and such Terms as would infallibly Exclude some, we must then grant that there was no necessity of alledging any Suitable Crime against them, and that they might be lawfully turn'd out, because they did not think it Lawful or Proper to come up to those Terms. But the Connexion here, is not so plain to me, as it seems to be to him. For supposing the Terms of that Declaration mention'd above to have been fix'd by Law as the Terms of the Establishment; and supposing it were own'd Lawful to Exclude those out of the Establishment who could not have come up to those Terms, it does not therefore follow that they might Lawfully be deny'd a *Toleration*, or excluded all Capacity of Publick service out of the Establishment, unless they had some suitable Crime alledg'd against them; aye and well prov'd to: And that such a Crime as rendred 'em utterly unfit to be any longer trusted with the Souls of those, who would think fit to commit themselves to their Care. We make in this Case a wide difference between being taken

into the Establishment, (if there must be one) and the being allow'd the Conduct of Volunteers out of the Establishment. Tho' the Terms of the Establishment were so wide and Large, as that those who refus'd to comply with them might justly be excluded out of it upon that Account; Yet it does not follow they must therefore have no *Toleration*, or can consistently with Reason and Justice be deny'd a Liberty to officiate among those who might think it for their Benefit to adhere to them, unless some Crime were prov'd upon them, that evidently discover'd their Unfitness for any such Charge or Office. And, upon this Account, we think the People among the Dissenters have very justly (as things have stood) adher'd to their ejected Ministers, who not only were unaccountably excluded the Establishment, when they would for the most part have come in to it upon the Terms of the King's Declaration; but were also deny'd, for many Years, a *Toleration*; and all without any suitable Crime prov'd against them, that could at all justify the depriving the Church of God of their valuable and useful Labours. The Gentleman I have to do with, does indeed call this of alledging a suitable Crime against these ejected Ministers, a *Ceremony*: But it is such a Ceremony as Proof of Guilt is before Condemnation, in the Course of Law: Which, if it be a Ceremony is yet necessary in all just Proceedings. I can't see any need he has to complain of *the difference in our ways of arguing*; for the whole appears very consistent. If Ministers were well qualify'd for Service, and had been own'd of God, tho' they had been shut out of the Establishment, yet should they not have been deny'd all opportunity of publick Service, unless they had been chargeable with some Crime that had made their

p. 88.
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continu'd Service scandalous. And because they were thus treated, therefore did many of the People think themselves the more concern'd to adhere to them; and that the rather, at a time when an universal deluge of Immorality and Profaneness was likely to be the consequence of their Ejection. The Argument, as I have stated it, will (I think) bear canvassing. And if he finds any real pleasure in bantering it as he has done, for my part I envy him not his satisfaction.

p. 89. At last he tells us, that *This Argument signifies very little to our present Times.* I answer; If it will contribute to the justifying the People in 1662, it signifies as much as it was brought for. And yet I can't say but that it may signify something too, if it be brought down to our present Times. For when the national Establishment is so narrow and strait, as to leave just ground of dissatisfaction to a number of conscientious Persons; if their Separation is justifiable, it is but necessary and fitting they should have Ministers to officiate among them. If any then are bred up in order to the Ministry, and duly qualify'd,

p. 90. *and cannot come up to the Terms of the establish'd Church,* and are thereupon ready to officiate among these People that are form'd into distinct Congregations out of the Establishment, and they choose them for their Pastors, and commit the care of their Souls to them, tho' I should drop the Words *inhumane* and *barbarous*, which Mr. Hoadly so much harps upon, yet I can't see how they could justify their wholly deserting them, and rejecting their Ministrations, till a suitable Crime was alledg'd against them. But then (says he) *A foundation is this way laid for constant divisions from an establish'd Church, tho' never so perfect.* I reply; 'Tis yet to be prov'd, that any establish'd Church is so perfect, as that

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Severity towards those who can't fall in with it, meerly because they are dissatisfied with it, can be justify'd. If the Government may make an Establishment, the Subjects are at liberty either to fall in with that Establishment, or stand out, according as it appears to them either agreeable or disagreeable to the Word of God, which is the common Rule. To say, this *lays a foundation for constant Divisions*, cannot overthrow the Position, because the contrary Supposition lays a foundation for worse Divisions; for then force must be used, which enrages instead of sweetning; and drives to the utmost distance instead of any thing of an amicable tendency; and it takes away all possibility of that *Peace and Love*, which all must own may be maintain'd under a Toleration, notwithstanding a diversity of Sentiments and Practice. But it is intimated, it should be remember'd what deplorable effects have been caused by setting up Church against Church, and Worship against p. 91.
 Worship; what Inhumanity and Barbarity this hath already occasion'd; and may again occasion in this Nation; what Prejudices and Passion, what Emulations and Opposition, what Hatred and Malice, what Jealousies and evil Surmises, what Disturbances and Unhappineses this naturally tends to produce in the World. I reply; 'Tis most highly fitting, that the consequences should be well consider'd on both sides: And if they are, I think the Consequences that attend force towards those that can't fall in with the Establishment, will; to those that will weigh them impartially, appear much worse, and more to be dreaded, than those that attend different Sentiments and Modes of Worship under a Toleration. - If either the natural tendency of things, or past experience, be well consider'd, it will appear that all the sad Consequences Mr. Hoadly hath reckon'd up, are chargeable

chargeable upon force used to bring into the Establishment, rather than a profess'd diversity of Sentiments and Practice, under a legal liberty to vary from the Establishment. And if I may be allow'd to give my sense, without being charg'd with *Prophecying*, I am satisfied it ever will be so.

Well then, let us see the result of this Argument. Mr. *Hoadly* says, it is *only founded upon the Consideration of the Inhumanity and Barbarity of deserting the ejected Ministers*. As to which I must needs say, I understood it otherwise; and so, I am persuaded, did Mr. *Baxter*, from whom I took it. I reckon the stress of the Argument to lie here. That those Ministers whose Labours they (as was urg'd before) had found so profitable, were ejected without having *any suitable Crime alleg'd against them*. This very Consideration clear'd their obligation to adhere to them. For tho' they had formerly profited by them, yet if, upon fair Tryal, they could have been prov'd guilty of Profaneness, Blasphemy, gross Immorality, or any such Crimes as would have render'd their continuance in the Ministry scandalous; this might have vacated their Obligation to adhere to them. But when no such Crime was prov'd, but they were in these respects innocent, they were upon this account the more oblig'd to adhere to them, when they were so treated, that they could not have been worse used if they had been guilty of the blackest Crimes. And for Mr. *Hoadly's* satisfaction, that the stress of the Argument does not lie upon its being said, that it would have been *inhumane and barbarous to desert them in these Circumstances*; he may, if he pleases, in the room of those Words substitute *irrational and unaccountable*, and he'll find the Argument as strong as ever. And I must needs

needs say, I think it would have been irrational and unaccountable, for Men to have deserted Ministers, by whom they had considerably profited, (and might reasonably hope to do so yet more for time to come) when they were not only ejected the Establishment, but deny'd all Capacity of farther Service out of the Establishment, without having any suitable Crime prov'd against them. This had been not only a piece of enmity to themselves, but to their Ministers too; it had been not only cruelty to their own Souls, but a voluntary betraying their Ministers, and a lending a helping hand to the burying their valuable Talents for all time to come.

But to go on. Another thing pleaded by several of the People among the Dissenters, in their own vindication, was this; That they were convinc'd of the *Justice of the Cause* their Ministers were engag'd in, *viz. The pressing a farther Reformation in Ecclesiastical Matters as necessary in order to the more general reaching of the great ends of Religion.* They thought it their Duty in their place to espouse the same Cause, and adhere to the same Principle, in opposition to those who reckon'd the Church so perfect as to need no amendments. In the answer to this, Mr. Hoadly is very large and copious. p. 92.

1. He says, they might *continue in the Communion of the Church of England, without thinking it so perfect as to need no amendments, and without forsaking this Cause of endeavouring a farther Reformation.* I reply; That when after a Commission given out by King Charles II. for enquiry, and long Debates about Amendments, in pursuance of that Commission, none of any moment could be obtain'd; the acquiescing in the Constitution, which was found very imperfect, might justly p. 93, 94.

justly be apprehended both by honest and discerning People, to be a strengthening the Hands of those who were against Amendments, and they, might upon that account be justly against it. Tho' it is not a *Term of Communion in the establish'd Church* that People must think it in every respect perfect; and tho' a Man may be honest and sincere, and yet minister or communicate in a Church while he thinks something or other in it may be made better: And tho' it be not a Duty, upon every defect we imagine to be in the Church, to withdraw our selves from the Communion of it; yet when the People found the Governors of the Church bottoming their Establishment upon an authority, to which, when call'd upon, they could not prove they had any Scriptural right; when they found gross Corruptions not only continu'd, but more confirm'd, notwithstanding the Complaints and Groans of a considerable number of pious People, even from the time of the Reformation from Popery; when they found such Defects continu'd as might open a Gap to farther burthensom Impositions, whenever their rigid Taskmasters should think a convenient opportunity offer'd: In this case, they might (I think) justly refuse falling in with the publick Establishment, not only in vindication of that Liberty to which God had given them an undoubted right, but to testify their sense of the great necessity of a farther Reformation, which had all comply'd, had been at once effectually obstructed. Tho' *Peace and Unity* are undoubtedly the concern of all Christians, and all are answerable for the breaches of them, as far as they are justly chargeable: Yet it is not necessary in order to Persons approving themselves lovers of *Peace and Unity*, to fall in with any Establishment, any farther than it is Scriptural. Whoever bring in, or defend the continuance
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of unscriptural Impositions, they are the real Breakers of that *Peace and Unity*, which according to the Laws of Christianity it is the common Duty of all, to preserve and promote. And tho' the *Constitution of a National Church is not the Concern of every Christian*; so as that every one must have a hand in fixing it: Yet every Christian has a right to insist upon it that it be Scriptural; and must have good Evidence of that, before it can be made appear to be his Duty to fall in with it: Tho' a Christian does not become answerable for the *Defects of a National Constitution*, if he had nothing to do in fixing or continuing them, yet as far as he favours, encourages or supports them, he fails in his Duty, not to himself barely, but to the Church in general. When then he puts the Question, *If a Man can himself, with that Care which every Christian ought to exercise, live in the Communion of it, (i.e. a National Church) righteously, soberly and godly; enjoy Ordinances without any sinful Mixtures, and be in a safe and secure way to Heaven; whence I beseech you can arise any Obligation upon him to break the publick Peace and Quiet of the Church?* I answer, many were perswaded they should have been wanting in that *Care which every Christian ought to exercise*, had they fallen in with the Establishment; and therefore they kept out of it.

One great Objection of some against it was, that the *Ordinances of God had sinful mixtures*, against which they thought themselves oblig'd to enter their Protest: But all that Dissented agreed in this, that God had given them a Liberty in divers Things as to which they who fix'd the Constitution were more forward to impose upon them than they had a Warrant for; and therefore tho' they did not pretend to say, that they who Conform'd might not be *safe in the way to Heaven*, they yet thought themselves obliged to

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Dissent, for fear of betraying that Liberty to which they had a Scriptural Right; the Invaders of which Right of theirs were the Persons that *broke the publick Peace and Quiet of the Church*; and not they who modestly took the Liberty which God allow'd them, of making the best Provision for their own Souls they could. 'Tis not in this case urg'd, as Mr. *Hoadly* pleasantly would insinuate, that *this Expression or this Word in the Liturgy is improper*; but the stress is laid on this; that here are sundry unscriptural Impositions in the Establishment, which are made Terms of Communion: When then a Man that searches into the Constitution ever since the Reformation, finds a great Fondness of these things, in those that have had the Ascendant; and no Amendments after long continu'd Complaints; nay, a design on foot to obstruct a farther Reformation, instead of advancing it; tho' he may not *therefore disturb and ruin the Quiet and Charity of the Nation*, he may yet lawfully dissent, and join himself with those whose Endeavour it is to conform themselves more nearly to the Rule of Scripture; which would not create *Disturbance*, if he was but left in that full liberty, which God hath given no Men Authority to deprive him of. That this Church *wants nothing necessary to the Edification of any serious Christian*, is more easily asserted than prov'd: And tho' it should *require nothing in order to Communion, but what were in it self lawful*, (which yet cannot be expected to be own'd till the Sense of that Phrase is better explain'd than it has hitherto been by Mr. *Hoadly*) yet as long as it requires of People if they Acquiesce in the Establishment, such a sort of Compliance with unscriptural Impositions, as they cannot discern is lawful, a *serious Christian* may very warrantably be *hindred from holding constant Communion with it*, in order to a greater Conformity to the Scripture Rule. Tho' we know that some as

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great and excellent Persons as ever belong'd to this Church, have not thought it so perfect as to need no Amendments; and have spoken and written, and very warmly argu'd for Amendments; yet it gives little Satisfaction, when after so long waiting, we seem as far from the reaching any such Amendments as ever: And tho' these Persons have still liv'd constantly in the Communion of the Church, yet it does not follow, that 'tis every Man's Duty herein to imitate them. Let every Man act as he is perswaded in his own Mind. Mr. Hoadly tells us, he never yet heard of a Man of tolerable Sense, that would seriously say, there was nothing in the Church of England, belonging either to its Government, Discipline or Liturgy, capable of Amendment, or which wants farther Reformation: Which is very possible; and when there is such abundant contrary Evidence, 'tis strange to me, that any should have said any thing bordering upon this: And yet I must needs say, if I were of Mr. Hoadly's Mind; (and I don't think him herein singular in his Sentiments) if I thought our Governours had ordered nothing but what if all would comply with, would be for the good of the Church, I should not talk much of Amendments, or think any room left for a farther Reformation. What hath hindred it, (he says) God knows: And I think we may know too, if we are not willing to remain in Ignorance. They only (he says) are to answer for this, who have resisted this Design; hindred the Reformation of any thing that is really amiss; and the Amendment of what it is reasonable to amend; of whatever might be more adapted to the Design of Christianity, or more fitted to promote the Honour of God: And I think it well deserves to be consider'd, whether all those are not in some measure chargeable with Guilt in this Respect; who strengthen the Hands of those who have all along oppos'd Amendments when

P. 97.

opportunity has offered ; who applaud the Constitution as next akin to Perfect ; or represent all Things as for the good of the Church, if all would comply with them, which the Governours of it have ordered. In short ; tho' a Man may hold constant Communion with the Church of England, without thinking it absolutely Perfect ; yet as long as he can't see how he can do it, without supporting those who have opposed Amendments when the most fitting Opportunity for them has offered ; I can't see what should hinder him from peaceably Dissenting, and encouraging those, whose distinguishing Principle it is to be for a more Scriptural Reformation.

But 2dly, He tells us, That we have not attained to Perfection, or to a greater Degree of it than what the Church may pretend to, by separating from it. That we are far from having attain'd to Perfection ; nay, that we are not so perfect as we might be, were both Ministers and People universally intent upon their Duty, we freely own, and heartily lament. We are not the Persons that dare pretend an Exemption from that general Depravation that has over-spread the Land.

p. 89. And yet that we have made some Advances, and gain'd something by leaving the Church of England, is what I think admits of an easy Proof. Comparisons we usually say are odious. I should not therefore have pursu'd one in this Case, if the Gentleman had not challenged us to it ; and put the matter so home, as that he would be in danger of Triumphant ; should I wholly wave it.

p. 100. Since therefore he so earnestly desires us to shew him plainly in what this greater Perfection is manifest, and represents this as absolutely necessary to the clearing of the Argument, I shall give him a brief View of the things in which I think we Dissenters are happier than those who are in the Constitution.

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We all fix on the Sacred Scriptures as our sufficient Rule and Standard, without admitting any thing in Doctrine-Worship or Discipline which is not thereby warranted: We allow of no Impositions upon Conscience, or force of any sort to constrain it: We are subject to no Authority, which requires Punctual Compliance with any things which we are not admitted to see the Reasons of. And we are allow'd to Judge for our selves, what Mode of Worship is most eligible, and what is agreeable to Scripture; what is Lawful, and what Expedient, and what otherwise; and to Act with freedom according to our Sentiments and Apprehensions. Among us, Ministers come under no Oath or Bond to superiors, that can hamper them in their Carriage towards those that are their Charge: They are liable to be called upon to execute no *Canons* but such as are truly Apostolical, and contain'd in Scripture; and which therefore are liable to no Exception. They are not forc'd with a great Appearance of Solemnity, to declare their *unfeigned Assent and Consent*, to what they often don't heartily approve of: Nor are they oblig'd to any thing in the Conduct of their Respective Flocks, saving to a few necessary things, agreed upon, for common Convenience. When Persons offer to come to the *Lords Table*, If they are either grossly Ignorant or Scandalous, they may keep them from it, till they are either better instructed or Reform'd, without any Danger of a Prosecution, which all must own a mighty Discouragment. Nor are they tempted to Prostitute Holy things, for fear of an Action of Damage for hindring a Man of an Office, for which, receiving the Sacrament is requir'd as a Qualification. They can Administer *Baptism* and all the other Ordinances of the Christian Religion, according

cording to the Purity of their Institution, without any needless Additions, without bearing hard upon the scrupulous, or at all breaking in upon that Liberty, to which our Lord hath given all his followers a Right. They are not forc'd to a stinted Form, whatever Varieties are requir'd by Particular Accidents and Occasions. If they prefer Forms, they are at Liberty to use them, provided they and their People agree upon it: And if they do not, they are at Liberty to let them alone; which is more agreeable than to be absolutely confin'd, where our Lord hath left a Liberty. If a Prince dies on a sudden, and they have notice of it, they are not oblig'd to wait for Particular Directions to leave out his Name in their Publick Prayers, or expect so Comical a List of needful Alterations as is usual in such Cases in the *Church of England*. If there be a Popish Prince on the Throne, they are free from any Obligation to pray that God would *keep and strengthen* such a Prince *in the true Worshiping of him*; while yet they esteem him an Idolater. And if this Prince aim at bringing back Popery, and a Forreign Prince when invited, comes to deliver the Nation from Popery and Slavery, they have nothing to do to make it a part of their Prayers, that *God would be the Defender and Keeper* of their Popish Prince, and *give him the Victory over all his Enemies*, and so Defeat the Designs, of our Deliverer: Nor if a spurious Prince is obtruded on the Nation, are they bound solemnly to give God thanks, According to a Form prescrib'd. They are not requir'd to Hope against Hope in the Case of the Deceased: Nor, do they send those to Heaven at the Grave, whom they condemn in the Pulpit. They can cast out a Brother that is notoriously scandalous, in pursuit of the Gospel-Rule, without any other steps than are therein mention'd;

conversing with him first alone, then with two or three, and at length bringing the matter before the Church, without any Concern with the Civilians, who make a Gain of Ungodliness, and get their Livelihood very much by the sins of the People. They are not oblig'd to confine their Charity to a Party. They may keep private Days of Humiliation, upon any Emergency, Publick or Private. And in short, may do whatever Christ has made their Duty as Ministers without having their Consciences hamper'd by any ensnaring Bond. They may deliver the whole will of God, secure the Purity of all Divine Institutions; and use the Liberty their great Master has left them in things Indifferent without Confinement. And then, as to the People, they can choose their own Pastors, and are under no Obligation to commit the Care of their Souls to any, in whose fitness for such a Charge they are not well satisfy'd: And as they can choose their own Pastors, so they can dismiss them too, if they fall into scandalous Immoralities; They are not still bound to maintain them as in the Church, where there is no getting such Ejected. They can become Church-Members, without doing violence to any Scruples, at all bearing hard upon their Consciences, or submitting to any unscriptural Authority that has fix'd new Terms of Communion. They can have their Children Baptiz'd, upon Christ's own Terms, without yielding to any new Dedicating Sign, or casting that Covenanting-Work upon Substitutes, which both Reason and Religion devolves upon Parents themselves: They can secure that Liberty which their Lord hath left them against all Pretenders: They can contribute (as much as it is their Duty to do so) to that Discipline, upon which the Purity of the Church Depends; and they can shew their Charity to those from whom

they differ, without the least Submission to an unscriptural Authority: In these Respects I must needs own, I think the Case of the Dissenters vastly preferable to the Establish'd Church,

Notwithstanding all which I can yet see considerable Imperfections remaining among us, and as freely complain of them. A Correspondence between Particular Churches, is very necessary and much wanting. 'Tis owing to this, that there is not that Harmony in things requisite to a common Order, that were highly desirable: And Particularly, that Persons that have been Ejected in some Churches as Scandalous, are sometimes ignorantly receiv'd into other Churches, without that Repentance, which is necessary to secure the Purity which ought to be endeavour'd after. Neither have we among us much of that Care as to Personal oversight, by Catechization and Particular Instruction, which Mr. *Baxter* so earnestly recommends in his *Gildas Salvianus*, and which would tend so much to promote the Profiting of the People, under the Publick Ordinances of Religion: The Neglect of which is owing to the want of more Ministerial help in our Respective Congregations, and the Distance of Habitations, together with something in Ministers, and thing also in the People, as makes this Work exceeding difficult after long disuse. In these things, (and some others that might be mention'd) it must be own'd we are still very imperfect: But it does not therefore follow, that we have made no advances beyond the Church of *England* in conformity to the Rule of Scripture.

Having thus given a view of the case, according to our apprehensions, I shall touch upon Mr. *Hoadly's* Comparison by way of *Interrogatory*; a way with which he seems much delighted. He asks if we are got beyond the Establishment, *in*
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the government of our Churches? And he wants to know *what that is?* I answer, That neither they nor we have any great reason to brag of our *Government*, will be freely own'd: And yet if we are defective, I think verily they are worse. They have *Bishops*, it's true; but where is their Power? Under that mix'd sort of Government we have among us, we are capable of a just care about the Qualifications of those who are own'd as Ministers; warning People to withdraw from such Ministers as are scandalous. Can they do any more? Nay, don't we generally find they fail even in this? Possibly it may be said, the Bishops have a Power of Suspension; and I grant they have the Name of it; but they must first have the consent of their Chancellors, (which is not easily to be gain'd in the case of Immorality) before they can reduce it to Practice. With us, Ministers may have the free exercise of the Pastoral Power; whereas in the Church, they have no more than the Bishops devolve upon them; and upon Male Administration 'tis the Lay Chancellor that has the Cognizance of the matter, and the Power in his Hands, rather than the Bishop. He enquires farther, as to our *Discipline*. As to which it is plain, that each particular Church may freely censure its own Members, who walk not according to Gospel Rule. After good proof of Immoralities charg'd, our Pastors may either refuse Admission, or reject from Communion. And I think I may (without offence) say, that there is more care in this respect taken among us than in the Establishment. For there, all are admitted indiscriminately; whereas among us, there is personal Conversation with the Pastor of the Church, and an enquiry into the Lives and Carriages of such as offer to Communion. There the affair of Immoralities is manag'd so

litigiously in the Ecclesiastical Courts, that both Ministers and People are discourag'd from meddling; whereas among us, let a Crime (that according to the Gospel is a bar to Communion) be but known, and prov'd by such as know it, and the Censure follows according to Rule. And if any particular Churches should herein be tardy, they are responsible to God and Man, and not the Body of the Dissenters. He comes next to *Worship*, and wants to know, whether we think we are got beyond them *in our Administration of the publick Offices of Religion*? I answer, That our way of Worship is more agreeable to the Rule of Scripture than theirs, (as far as there is a difference between them) is what he may be assur'd we are fully persuaded of; and therefore we are bound to act according to our Judgment, till their contrary Proof lays a foundation for a Conviction. But as we expect not that our asserting this will satisfy them; so neither can we see that they can have any reason to expect that their contrary assertion should contribute to our satisfaction. The Proof alledged on both sides, (for which this is not a proper place) should be duly consider'd; and then Persons should judge accordingly. But he is yet more particular in his Queries: *Is a stated Liturgy* (says he) *compos'd of Sentences, Lessons, Psalms, and Hymns, taken out of the Scripture, and of pious and profitable Prayers, an imperfect and low Dispensation, when compar'd with the Performances amongst you, which must wholly depend upon the Preparation, Abilities, Temper, and present Disposition of the Persons who are to officiate? And is it more for the honour of God, for the decency of publick Worship, for the edification of the Christian Church, that a general Encouragement should be given to this, than such a Liturgy be join'd with?* I reply; That 'tis one thing to Query, which was the primitive way of divine Service,

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whether with a Form, or without one? And another to Query, which way has the fewest Inconveniencies; at a Time, and in an Age, when we have all in common so much reason to lament the want of the primitive Spirit of Piety and Zeal? That in Scripture-Times, the Followers of our great Lord and Master were at liberty to express their Wants and Desires, and cloath their Prayers and their Praises with such Expressions as they thought meet, without being confin'd to any Forms from which they might not vary, is what I shall firmly believe, till I see better evidence to the contrary than I have as yet met with. That as the Spirit of Piety decreas'd, stated Forms were introduc'd and settled, is also evident. That they are in themselves unlawful, is an imagination of a few; but was far from being entertain'd by the generality of the ejected Ministers, or their Followers. That they are always to be preferr'd, as more agreeable to the divine Majesty, than serious Addresses, that are vary'd with Times, Seasons, and Circumstances, is what, I doubt, will never be prov'd. That each way of publick Prayers may have its Conveniencies and its Inconveniencies, cannot be question'd. If the praying constantly in Publick according to a fix'd Liturgy, has this convenience, that it does not *depend upon the Preparation, Abilities, Temper, and present Disposition of the Persons who are to officiate*; it must yet be own'd, by impartial Persons, that it is less suited to particular Circumstances and Occasions than is many times requisite; and it tends to cherish a neglect of *the gift of Prayer*, which if attain'd and well manag'd, would be highly profitable both to Ministers and People; and these are no small Inconveniencies. That it is neither *for the honour of God, the decency of publick Worship, or the edification*

cation of the Church, that such a Liturgy as ours (that has so many obnoxious Expressions to be continually repeated, and so much Confusion and Disorder, and so many needless Repetitions) should be adher'd to, to the discouraging of free Prayer, in a grave manner, in Scriptural Language, according to the Circumstances and Occasions of those who join in publick Worship, is what I am abundantly convinc'd of. And yet I am no enemy neither to a well order'd Liturgy, supposing Persons left at liberty to use or omit it, according to their Inclinations and Circumstances. But Mr Hoadly makes a motion for procuring a true Copy of all the publick Prayers used in all the Congregations throughout the whole Land on any one Lord's Day, by those who have thrown off the use of the Liturgy; and for comparing these with the Service in the Common-Prayer-Book establish'd; and says, that this would clearly demonstrate which is most for the honour of God, and the decency of his Worship; which gives most occasion to Improprieties and Irregularities in his Service; which is, univversally speaking, most for the True and Christian Edification of the People; the method we have chosen and encourag'd, or the imperfect discarded Liturgy. To which I shall only make this Reply, That supposing as he moves for a Copy of all the Prayers of the Dissenters, I should move for a Copy of all the Sermons of the Church-men in the Kingdom upon any one Lord's Day; and as he is for comparing the one with the Service-Book, so I should compare the other with the Homilies of the Church, I believe I should get as good and strong an evidence by my Method, that we ought constantly to Preach by a Form; as he by his, that we ought to Pray by a Form, without any variation. I believe I should get as good a demonstration, that it would be most for the honour of God, and

the decency of his Worship, and, universally speaking, most for the True and Christian Edification of the People to have only Homilies in the Pulpit, as he, that it would best answer those ends to have only the Liturgy in the Desk. Or if he slight my propos'd Demonstration, he would do well to shew how his own will hold, or be of any significance. For I should think he's as much oblig'd to prove, that there are fewer and more in- p. 103.
considerable Imperfections in the ordinary Discourses of the Clergy than in the stated Homilies, in order to the justifying his preferring the former before the latter; as we are to prove, that there are fewer and more inconsiderable Imperfections in our Prayers, than in the Liturgy, to justify our preferring them before it.

Well then, what would the Gentleman have? Would he, because we are not perfect, have us own we have as gross Imperfections as they? How can that be, when we are fully persuaded of the contrary? Would he have us own we have got nothing by our Separation, when we have the things upon which we lay the greatest stress? Would he extort a confession from us, that we are not farther reform'd than they, because we have some things among us yet to be reform'd? Is this to be accounted for? How odd are his Queries? *How incongruous is it (says he) that you* p. 98.
should separate from the Church of England because it is not perfect, and be your selves in the mean while as imperfect and defective Churches as that you have separated from? But how easily might the Query have been spar'd, when he knows we do not separate from the Church of England because it is not perfect, (which we know no Church will be upon Earth) but because it cherishes sundry gross Imperfections, and is so incurably fond of unscriptural Additions, which, in our Churches, we
 have

have avoided, and keep free from? He farther
 p. 99. Queries, *If the Cause you are engaged in, the pressing Reformati-
 ons and Amendments, be a good reason for Separation, or lay an obligation upon you to separate, why do you not separate from your own Churches, in order to the bringing them to Perfection?*
 I answer, 'Tis every Man's Duty to join with that Church which, upon search and examination, appears to him most agreeable to the Rule and Pattern of Scripture. We esteem this the case of some separate Churches, if compar'd with the *Church of England*; and therefore we join with them; for we don't love Separation for Separation sake, but are only desirous of coming as near to Scripture as may be: And when a Church offers that appears yet more agreeable to the Scripture, we shall think our selves oblig'd to fall in with that, unless the particular Churches we join'd with before can be prevail'd with therein to imitate them. His other Queries are answer'd before.

Upon the whole then, if the Moderate Non-conformists have escap'd many of the Irregularities and Disorders which have all along been most justly complain'd of in the *Church of England*, and are more conformable to the Rule of Scripture in sundry Things than they, (which may be easily judg'd of by a particular Comparison) then the People did well in falling in with them, even tho' there were several Imperfections remaining among them; to which Imperfections however, all are in their several Places, bound to endeavour to apply a suitable Remedy. But Mr. Hoadly asserts farther,

p. 103. 3. *That to separate from a Church in order to obtain a farther Reformation is not in it self a reasonable or defensible thing.* But he must give us leave to be of the contrary Sentiment, till he has well prov'd

prov'd that Assertion. *This Argument* (he says) *supposes that the Church is tolerable* : But supposing the Irregularities retain'd at its first Reformation from the Popish Idolatry and Superstition, might be thought *tolerable* at that time, it does not follow, but the incurable Fondness of them that is afterwards discovered, and the so settling in them as to obstruct Amendments, may render them intolerable. So that tho' *this be the same Church with which the old Puritans thought constant Communion to be lawful and necessary in their Day* ; yet it neither follows, that the separating from a Church in order to obtain a farther Reformation, must be in it self an irrational and undefensible thing ; or that these *Old Puritans* themselves, had they lived in our times, and found the Church so fix'd in those Corruptions that had been so long complain'd of, would not have been for Separation as well as we. *That which* (he says) *this Argument intends, is not that we cannot Communicate with this Church as the old Puritans did, but that finding no likelihood of compassing a farther Reformation in it by communicating with it, we separate from it as the most likely way to obtain this Reformation.* I answer, in the proposing the Argument, the Old Puritans are not refer'd to one way or another : But since he will refer to them, I must needs say, I think he ought to distinguish between waiting for Amendments when good hopes are given of them by many in Power ; and a pretending to wait for them, when there is no rational Hope remaining. But *supposing this a likely Method to compass the Reformation desired, (of which under the next Head)* He says, *it seems to him to be a Method not allowed by Reason or Christianity.* Which if he can make appear by suitable Evidence, they will be grossly faulty, who should pretend to defend it. To me I must indeed confess

fess it were a sufficient Inducement to declar^e
 against *this Method*, if I could find was no^t
 allowed by Christianity: But Supposing it as Mr.
Hoadly, here does, that *this were the likeliest Me-*
thod of bringing this farther Reformation to effect,
 I should hardly charge it as a *Method not allowed*
by Reason. For my Part I cant see how that
 Method can be irrational, that is the most likely
 of any to reach the End design'd. But to let
 that Pass. How does it appear that *this Method*
is not allowed by Christianity? Why According to
 the best of Mr. *Hoadly's* understanding, and his
 present view, it is a *doing evil that good may come*.
 And if he can make it out that he herein under-
 stands the matter right, and that his present View
 is just, I'll own his Charge: For I am very sensi-
 ble Christianity neither does nor can in any case
 allow of the *doing evil, that good may come*. But the
 Proof in this Case is to be attended to. He argues
 from the Civil Government to the Ecclesiastical.
 p. 105. He says, It would be *Rebellion and a sinful Disobedi-*
ence, to rise up against a tolerable Civil Governmen,
and fill the World with Confusion. 'Tis granted him:
 He need not ask, whether it would *sanctify such*
a practice, to say that this is done in order to the
making it compleat and perfect? He knows very
 well, we therein agree with him. But then his
 Argument lies in the Query that is added, and
 founded upon a suppos'd Parallel: *Supposing* (says
 he) *a Church to be tolerable, and nothing to be requir'd*
in order to Communion with it, but what may law-
fully be comply'd with; tho' it be not so perfect as it
might be, and as you wish it, yet will it not be sin-
ful to seperate from it, and disunite Christians from
one another? I answer tho' Rebellion against the
 Civil Government is a great sin, yet it does not
 follow that separating from a Church that un-
 warrantably imposes unscriptural Terms of Com-
 munion

munion is so too: for there is a mighty difference between the two Cases. Rebellion is therefore a sin, because it is in effect a resisting of God, as it is a resisting that Power which he has invested the Magistrate withal: But Separation in the Case suppos'd, is so far from being a resisting God, in refusing a Compliance with such a Power as he has convey'd, that it is a complying with him, and yielding to him, as it is an opposing a pretended Spiritual Power, which he never conveyed, in order to a greater Conformity to the Rule of Scripture, than could be reach'd under a submission to any such pretended Power. He therefore shoots very wide, when he asks in this Case, *will the end proposed sanctify an Evil which hath so very pernicious and sad Consequences?* For here is no *Evil* to be sanctified. It is so far from being an *Evil* to separate from a Church that appears incurably fond of unscriptural Terms of Communion, that it is highly agreeable to God, and will yield Peace and Comfort both here and hereafter. As for the *pernicious and sad Consequences*, so oft mentioned, they as it hath been often replied, are chargeable upon those that herein pretend to a Power that Christ never gave them, and not upon those who are passive in their Separation. The Imposers are the Persons, who properly *dis-unite Christians from one another*, and not they who are forced to separate in order to a greater Conformity to Scripture. When then he farther asks, *will it be sufficient to say, we separate in order to the bringing this Church to greater Perfection?* I answer, 'tis abundantly sufficient to say, we separate from a National Church, whose Bottom is as far as we can judge unscriptural, and which with time grows but more and more settled upon that Bottom, both that we may have the greatest Conformity to the Rule of
Scripture

p. 106.

Scripture among our selves; and that we may as far as in us lies bring that Church to a nearer Conformity to that Rule, if it would have us embody with it. But (says he) *is Separation to innocent and harmless a thing, that any good propos'd at a distance shall justify it and make it Eligible?* Still where's the Assertion made good, that the separating from a Church settled in various gross Corruptions and Disorders, in order to a farther Reformation, is *a doing Evil that Good may come?* This was the thing to have been prov'd. But a hundred such Queries will never prove it. However; I answer, *Separation* is either innocent and harmless, or unjustifiable and blame-worthy, according to the Grounds and Occasions of it. Tho' *every good that is propos'd at a Distance won't justify it*, yet where it really tends to a greater Conformity to the Rule of Scripture both in Persons themselves and others too, 'tis very justifiable, 'tis really Eligible. But (says he) *no Men have inveigh'd more against it, than you and your Predecessors.* I answer, whoever have inveigh'd against it, no Man can prove that Separation as such is blameable, or that every degree of Separation is unwarrantable, where one certain extreme degree of it is so. As far then as either the ejected Ministers or their Predecessors, could prove the Separation they inveigh'd against was unwarrantable, so far they were in the right but no farther. *No Man has loaded it with more Aggravations than Mr. Baxter.* What, all sorts of Separation, tho' manag'd with Charity and Moderation? That would be strange, I confess! But 'tis no new thing for Persons to represent that Good Man as inconsistent with himself, when it seems for their Interest he should be tho't so! However; let him or others have said what they will, it does not follow that a Charitable Separation from a Church of such a Constitution

stitution as the National Church of *England*; and that appears so fix'd in its Corruptions, is a real Evil, nay is not strictly defensible. And to apply what has been said by any either in former Times, or more lately, against a *Brownistical Separation*, to those who are well known to separate upon quite different Principles, is not fair nor candid. It may easily be allow'd, that they who so separate from the Church of *England*, as to unchurch her Parish Churches, and utterly disown the acceptableness of their Worship to God, are to be condemn'd: But it does not follow therefore that they are to be condemn'd, who separate from the Church of *England* in order to a greater conformity to Scripture, and yet respect the Members of that Church as Brethren, and are ready to express their Charity to the Church under all its disorders, in any proper and fitting ways. But let us see how he argues: *We are oblig'd* (he says) *not to seek the Glory of God in all ways.* 'Tis granted. *And it is unlawful to endeavour or design the amendment or advantage of a Church by all methods.* 'Tis also granted him. What does he infer? Why, — *Therefore* (says he) *to separate from a Church with which you can hold Communion in all Christian Offices without sinning, under pretence of bringing it to more Perfection, is unlawful.* I answer; Many who separate from the Church of *England*, are persuaded in their Consciences they cannot hold Communion with that Church in all Christian Offices, as they manage them, without sinning. I hope they may be excus'd. And it must be own'd he fairly brings them off, by declaring, *That if we could not join with the Church of England in the Offices of Religion, without sinning against our Consciences, this turns Separation from a Sin into a Vertue, by making it a necessary Duty.* But then he adds;

Since we can Communicate without sinning, and yet separate, he sees not what can make it necessary or excusable. I reply; If they that cannot at all join with the Church of *England* in the Offices of Religion, without sinning against their Consciences, are therefore excusable in not joining at all with them; then it follows, that they that cannot constantly join with the same Church of *England* in all the Offices of Religion without sinning against their Consciences, are also excusable in not joining constantly with them. And this is our case with whom he is here dealing; and therefore since we can't join so constantly with the Church as he desires, without sinning against our Consciences, our Separation, while we think so, must be not only excusable, but necessary.

He seems to have been aware of this, and therefore attempts to solve the Difficulty, by insinuating, that constant Communion could not, upon such Principles as ours are, be a sinning against our Consciences. But I'll illustrate the matter by an instance. I'll suppose a Man to have his choice as to the Preachers he'll hear. There's an ordinary and weak Preacher whom he hears sometimes, while yet he stately attends on the Preaching of those who are better qualify'd. For this Man to hear this weak Preacher constantly, would be a sinning against his Conscience; inasmuch as it would be a depriving himself of better help in his way to Heaven; and yet it does not follow he sins, in hearing him sometimes. The encouraging an honest Man who perhaps does his best; and the encouraging others to attend upon him who can't have better; and the preserving him from their contempt, may be sufficient reasons for his hearing him sometimes, tho' not always. For any Man to say, If you can hear him

him sometimes, you ought to do it always ; and if it is not against your Conscience to hear him now and then, it cannot be against your Conscience to do it for a constancy, would be very odd arguing. And so it is in this case. But as for the different aspect, sense, and interpretation of a constant and an occasional Communion with the Church of *England*, I shall reserve it to its proper place, where it falls in more naturally ; that so I may avoid needless repetitions. For tho' Mr. *Hoadly* is very often for harping upon the business of *Occasional Communion*, yet I can be very well content to reserve the consideration of it to the close of the Debate, without repeating the same things over and over, as he has done. In the mean time, as long as we declare our *Constant Communion* with the Church of *England*, while we have our present apprehensions of things, would be a *sinning against our Consciences*, I think he ought to believe us ; and he acts not Charitably if he refuses.

But, says he, *Division and Subdivision without* p. 110;
end, Confusion and Disorder, Indecency in the Worship of God, Irregularity, Strife and Emulation, Heat and Passion, Ill-will and Malice, are the unavoidable Consequences of such a Separation as you have given a general encouragement to. I answer ; These have been the Consequences of a stiffness in unwarrantable unscriptural Impositions, but not of a charitable Separation in order to a freedom from such Impositions. That these things (says he) *are unavoidable, you must own, if you understand either humane Nature, or constant Experience.* I answer ; We endeavour to get what understanding of humane Nature we can ; neither are we altogether inobservant of Experience ; and the more we understand the former, or observe the latter, we are the more against unscriptural

tural Impositions: And the more we read our Bibles, and converse with sober Reason, we are the more satisfy'd the Imposers will bear the blame of the *unavoidable* Consequences of their Impositions; while yet the sufferers under their Impositions are answerable for any undue Heat or Uncharitableness in their Temper and Practice.

p. III. When then he asks, *Who would not do any thing but commit Sin, to avoid any thing like these?* I answer; He has urg'd a good Argument upon his own Church, who may very safely drop the Impositions complained of, without *committing Sin*: while we cannot comply with them, in that degree they insist upon, without *sinning against our Consciences*; to do which, in order to the avoiding any sort of Mischief, would be a real *doing evil that good might come*; the very thing which he has charg'd upon us, but is yet to prove. He adds, *That he takes it to be a certain Rule, that of two Evils it is the Duty of every Man to chuse the least.* Which I look upon as far from a *certain Rule*, where the *Evils* under consideration are both of a Moral Nature. For it can never be the *Duty* of a Man to choose any Moral Evil; nor will it excuse him to pretend he chose a less Moral Evil in any case to avoid a greater; nor does God in any case put his poor Creatures into such Circumstances, as that they can be under any real necessity of sinning. But however, according to his Rule we are sufficiently justify'd. Inasmuch as it is a less Evil for a Man to separate from a Church that is fix'd upon an unscriptural Bottom, wherein, after so long waiting and arguing, there appears little or no hope of amendment; than it is for Men to sin against their Consciences, by constantly Communicating with it, to the utter hindrance of their own Purity,

rity, greater conformity to the Scripture-Rule, and Christian Edification. The bad Consequences in the former case are owing to those that uphold the Church upon such an unscriptural Bottom: But the bad Consequences in the latter case would be chargeable upon the Persons themselves that are concern'd; and they really outweigh; and to pretend the contrary, is an urging Men *to do evil that good may come.* But he asks, *What greater Obligation can a Christian lie under, than that by which he is bound to avoid every thing that tends to ruin the Peace and Quiet of Society?* I answer; He's under the greatest Obligation imaginable to avoid sinning against his Conscience. That is the Obligation that must take place. And tho' he is also oblig'd, *to avoid every thing that tends to ruin the Peace and Quiet of Society,* yet if the Governors of the Church will take a Method *that tends to ruin the Peace and Quiet of the Society,* by introducing and continuing unwarrantable, unscriptural Impositions and Additions to divine Worship, he is no way oblig'd so far to fall in with them, as to sin against his Conscience. But he goes on: *Would he that reads the Gospel seriously, imagine it to be the Duty of a Christian, or worth his while, to quit his regards to Unity and Love, in order to rectifie somewhat that he thinks amiss in a Church, in which he meets with all things necessary to his Salvation, and nothing destructive of it, and in the Communion of which he can live and die a good Christian?* I answer; I hope we read the Gospel as seriously as our Neighbours; and it is because we are for adhering to the Gospel we read, we are the more against our Ecclesiastical Constitution; even because we can't find there the least footsteps of many of those things which our Brethren are so fond of. We

are not for *quitting* our regards to *Unity and Love*; we shew the contrary, by our professing a *Brotherly Love* to them notwithstanding we disapprove their Methods; and a readiness to *Unite* with them as soon as ever they will lay aside what the Scriptures will neither justify nor warrant. We don't disown, that in the midst of all the Corruptions of the National Church, there are all things necessary to Salvation; and that Men in the Communion of it may live and die good Christians; God forbid we should call this into question; and yet we find so many things amiss in the Church, and such an inclination to retain them, and so little hope of amendment; and are so well satisfy'd, that 'tis our Duty to endeavour a greater conformity to the Scripture Rule, that we should *sin against our Consciences* in settling upon their Bottom, which we cannot see how a profess'd regard to *Unity and Love* could ever justify. Nay farther I'll go on; We are very sensible what a stress is laid upon *Charity and Peace* in that Law by which we are to be judg'd, and therefore can't induce our selves to neglect the promotion of these even for one Day. We are for promoting *Charity and Peace*, by opposing those things that have been the bane of both, and are like to be so as long as they are continu'd; and this we think a more rational and scriptural way and method, than *sinning against our Consciences* by such a compliance with them, as we are persuaded, is unwarrantable. We pretend not to recompence our Lord, by pleading, that we have some hopes this way of adding to the Perfection of one particular Church: But hope to approve our selves to him, as faithful in the discharge of our Duty; inasmuch as we, by our Practice, do what in us lies to promote a general Conformity to the Scripture Rule, without unchurching those from whom

whom we differ, because we are not willing to betray that Liberty to which he has given us an undoubted Right. *Charity is indeed edifying to the Church*; and we are therefore the more against Ecclesiastical Impositions, because they ruin that *Charity* by which *the Church should be edify'd*. It much conduces to the beauty and splendor of his Church, that his Disciples be of loving and peaceable Dispositions; and therefore we judge those to be so much the more to blame, who cannot own those for Brethren who are not just of their mind and way; which is a Fault from which we endeavour to keep our selves free: But cannot see how our compliance with the Humours of those who desire to impose upon us, is necessary to evidence that we are of *loving and peaceable Dispositions*. Without Peace and Love, we easily grant, *all the Perfection in the World is not lovely in his Eyes*; but that *with them, Imperfection is by him accounted Perfection*, is a high flight indeed; too high, I must needs say, for us to approve of. For supposing Persons to be *peaceable and loving*, and therein to conform themselves to Scripture, (which, by the way, is what we carefully endeavour even under our Separation) that this will make that agreeable to the Gospel Rule that was not so before, or more agreeable to it than it was before, is what we are at a loss to understand. That Peace and Love *are the chief and principal things that compose the Beauty and exact Symmetry of a Church*, is what we don't gainsay: And upon that account we look upon those who lay all the stress upon an exact Uniformity, and that in humanely devised Rites and Ceremonies, as the more blame-worthy. And tho', 'tis granted, *we should but in vain talk of making a Church Perfect, whilst we were doing what must inevitably ruin that in which its greatest Glory must consist*; yet it is not

a vain thing to talk of a farther Reformation, as desirable and necessary, and earnestly to be insisted on, while we endeavour each in our places to discharge the Duty which God hath requir'd of us, and peaceably dissent from those whose Right to impose upon us we cannot discern. Let him say it a hundred times over, it no more follows that we are bound to credit him in saying, *That they who separate give occasion to all the instances of Uncharitableness, &c.* than he is bound to credit us when we say, The occasion is given by those who force upon a Separation, by their introducing or endeavouring to perpetuate unscriptural Impositions. A Judgment must here be form'd by all that would act rationally, according to the Evidence produc'd, and we are not afraid that Judgment will be given against us by those that duly observe, how ready we are to have the Matters in difference between us determin'd by Scripture, and how much more forward our Brethren are to pass a condemning Sentence upon us, than we are upon them. *That all Christians are bound indispensably to avoid giving occasion to Uncharitableness,* we are very sensible; and that's one reason why we are for Communicating sometimes with the Church from which we statedly separate; that we may this way shew we don't unchurch them, which on one side and t'other might occasion great uncharitableness; but that all Christians are *more oblig'd, in this case, than to study the perfection of the outward Forms of Church Government and Worship, supposing them but tolerable,* is a dubious Expression. If this be his sense, That it is of more moment for Christians to have a peaceable and loving Spirit, than to be in the Right in the particular Matters about which we differ, 'tis freely yielded: But if he hereby means, That it is a greater Duty for Persons to shew their

their inclination to Peace and Love, by a compliance with unscriptural Impositions, than peaceably to endeavour a greater Conformity to the Rule of the Gospel, where Corruptions have been long retain'd, and there is no hope of amendment, farther Proof than has been as yet produc'd is necessary to our conviction. And yet that nothing can dissolve the Obligation Christians are under to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace, is what we as firmly believe as the old Puritans, whom he mentions, (tho' he does not seem over well acquainted with them) or any Men whatsoever.

p. 114.

Mr. Hoadly begs *Pardon* for being *troublesome and tedious on this Head*. He has free Liberty of, his own way; and should therefore methinks the more readily give the same to his Neighbours. He owns himself *transported*. 'Tis very discernible. Had he met with such Passages in me, as those which follow, he'd have call'd it *Haranguing*. However I'll transcribe his own words with another turn, and let him see how he likes them. *It grieves me, to see a Church torn to pieces, its Members divided from one another, Discord triumphing upon the ruins of Unity, and Uncharitableness reigning without controul, and all this brought about by Men of Seriousness and Consideration, Men that profess they desire nothing more than the Edification and Perfection of this very Church. Had you ask'd the Enemies of this Church and Nation, those whom it has so gloriously and successfully oppos'd, which way you should take to ruin both Church and Nation, they would have thought of no other, but the fixing and perpetuating such unscriptural Impositions as have produc'd, and till remov'd tend to perpetuate a Separation. And they may well be pleas'd that you think the constant urging of these impositions your Duty in order to the preventing such things*

things as you call Irregularities and Disorders. *Because this thought will help more Effectually to bring about their wishes. You are as far from desiring that their wishes may be accomplish'd as any Persons living, but you know sometimes Good Men have given an unhappy occasion to what hath produc'd Effects quite Contrary to their designs; such Effects as they would afterwards have given all the World to hinder, but they could not. This hath been Experienc'd in this Nation, and Experience should teach us all Wisdom. And as I am deeply touch'd with these thoughts my self, so I cannot help beseeching God, that if they have any weight in them, they may likewise affect you, and forcibly move you to do somewhat towards the reviving Christian Love and Unity in the Land.*

p. 115.

p. 116.

As for what he has under this Head suggested as to Constant Communion and Occasional, I shall consider it in its proper place. And shall only remind him, that the Heavy Charge here bro't remains unprov'd; We are accus'd of *doing evil that good might come*: But there's no suitable Proof: And for any thing here advanc'd, the separating from such a Church, as ours in order to a farther Reformation, may be both highly Reasonable and Defensible. But he adds farther,

p. 117.

4. That *the Method we have taken is far from being a likely way to make the Church of England one Degree more Perfect than it is. But if what has been before advanc'd will hold, and we are our selves come nearer to the Rule of Scripture than we could have been in that Church, 'tis some Satisfaction and Comfort; Even tho' the Church of England should not be one Degree more Perfect than it is, by our taking such a Method of separating from it. And I'll add, that tho' Mr. Hoadly cannot think that we our selves*

can

can judge the Methods we have taken at all likely to induce the Church to a farther Reformation, yet it is a harder thing than he imagines to put us in a way, which when examin'd and canvass'd, will appear more likely even in that respect, than that which we are in. He asks, *is it a likely way to obtain any Amendments, in the Establish'd Form of Church Government, wholly to lay aside Bishops, to discard the inequality in the Christian Church, between them and Presbyters?* I answer, had he duly consider'd, I hardly suppose he'd have mention'd this. For wherein do their Bishops in the Church of England differ from other Ministers, if they are stripp'd, of their Lordships, and Revenues, and the Preeminence which the Law has given them? Let these be withdrawn, and it would scarce be the work of half an Age, to bring them to the same pass with us, that there should be no other inequality among their Spiritual Guides, than what arises from Seniority, or Election, or a Visible Difference in their Gifts and Graces. However he cannot be insensible, that the Commissioners at the Savoy, and they who afterwards were dealt with about a Comprehension, and they who Act upon their Principles, have no such aversion to Bishop Usher's Moderate Episcopacy, as could make any great Difference with those who are not for Cherishing a Spirit of Imposition. He goes on: *Is it a likely way, to obtain those Alterations you have thought reasonable in the Establish'd Liturgy, to lay aside Liturgys wholly, and encourage such a Liberty in Publick Worship, as must very often be the occasion of much disorder, and imprudence in it?* I answer, Let him soften the Expression of the latter part of his Query and the matter is not so difficult to Account for, as he may apprehend. Let him but suppose such care taken as to all admitted to the Ministry, as that they
be

be able to express themselves in Prayer, in a Scripture Phraseology, accommodated to the General and Particular Occasions of Christians, (which with the Use of Prudent Helps is far from being an impossible attainment) and there needs no such mighty dread of *disorder* and *imprudence*, as he would intimate, And let but the Gift of Prayer be encourag'd, and there are many who now they have their full Liberty, Use no Liturgy, who yet could so far submit as sometimes to use one; provided it was agreeable to Scripture, and consisted of such things as serious Christians are generally agreed in: And if this be not a likely way to bring the *Church of England* to alter her Liturgy we cannot help it: We have the satisfaction of following the Method of Scripture and of the Purest Ages of Christianity; and at the same time cannot but wonder, that the Church hath not e'er this alter'd the Liturgy out of concern for her own Credit, if she won't do it out of tenderness to us. *We run not into the farthest Extreme possible from those with whom we desire to unite.* Convince us of swerving from the Rule of Scripture, and we'll soon retract it: And we desire not to Unite, unless it be in that and in measures agreeable to it. *We put our selves at no greater distance from you, than your distinguishing Particularities make between us. We educate and instruct the People in Modes of Worship no more different from Yours, than Yours are from Scripture.* Instead of *keeping up prejudices against the Church* we admonish all to love sober Persons that Communicate with her as Brethren; and to take all fitting ways to shew their Charity. And instead of *Loading the Cause of Conformity with all the Aggravations and imagin'd ill Consequences possible to be thought of, we readily make all the Allowances which we can discern either Reason or Charity*
requires

requires. We seek not to *force and Hect* the Church into Compliance and Condescension: We are willing to yield all the submission she can prove from Scripture she has a right to demand. We know not what is meant by *bad Usage*, and *Violent Contradiction*, as apply'd to our Carriage to the Church, where there have been supplications and Entreatys in abundance, from the first Reformation, down to this very day; and I am not dispos'd to recriminate; where I am sure those words may be apply'd most properly. But shall only add, that if *opposition and Violence* are talkt off, we think it becomes the Church to look at home. If Men will be *anger'd and incens'd* because we modestly use that Liberty which God hath given us, and to which we have now also a *Legal Right*, we cannot help it: And if the Proposal of the Reasons of our Nonconformity, *move the resentment and stir up the Passions* of our Brethren of the Church of England, 'tis a sign they are for Governing us more by Authority, than Reason. And if our sober Debating matters as Opportunity offers, *raise a mist before their Eyes, and cast a cloud before their Understanding*, to hinder all the Efforts of their Good Nature, and utterly to set them against all Terms of Reconciliation, and all overtures of Peace; we cannot but look upon it as a sad intimation, that they have a much greater fondness for the names of *Love and Peace*, than for the things themselves. If we have *given encouragement to Churches opposite to the Establish'd Church*, we cannot be convinc'd we have been guilty of a Crime, till it is prov'd that those Churches are opposite to Scripture Rule: And if, tho' they are agreeable to that, our Brethren are by our Proceedings, *Effectually indispos'd from hearing of any Proposals for Accommodation, or from thinking of an Agreement to*

any

any Alterations, 'tis a shrewd sign they rather desire to Lord it over us, than to settle the Church upon a right Bottom. That we who are persuaded of the Unscripturalness of the Bottom the Church stands upon, and who our selves have Oportunity for a nearer Conformity to Scripture, should have seperated from it, as from a Church with which Constant Communion is is not allowable, is no more strange than that we separate at all; for 'tis not conceivable we could do it upon any other bottom: But that we can notwithstanding our separation sometimes Communicate with them, is an Argument of our remaining Brotherly respect, which we think ought not to be slighted, much less wrested and misinterpreted. And if we are bound to study a greater Conformity to the Rule of Scripture our selves, we are also bound therein to assist all those who will bear us company: If he will call this a drawing many People from the Church, he has his liberty; but if they by rectifying the Disorders complain'd of, would draw them back again, and accept of the Scripture Standard, they would find we should heartily rejoice. Who are those most irregular and imperfect Churches with which we have chosen to join and unite, rather than with the Church of England, I can't imagine, unless he means those of the Congregational way: But let him prove that we join or unite with them any farther than they agree with Scripture; let him prove that we make our Interest one with theirs, to the damage and detriment of the common Interest of Religion among us, before he brings this in as a Charge against us; nay, let him prove that we are not as ready to unite with the Church of England as with any sort of Men whatever upon Scripture Terms, before he represents our Carriage as so provoking. Let him shew who they

they are that for *many Years* have written with p. 120.
such a concern and heat against the Church of Eng-
land; that they could hardly write with more against
the Church of Rome it self, if he expects the Con-
viction should fasten: And let him shew evident-
ly how it follows that they, who freely give the
Reasons why they cannot conform themselves;
must blacken the Ministerial Conformity of others,
with such a number of aggravations as must make
it a complication of Sins of the most horrid and un-
pardonable nature; or that they who prove that
their Separation is justifiable both by Reason and
Scripture, are justly chargeable with alienating
the Minds and Hearts of the Nation from the esta-
blish'd Church, and those that Minister in it. These
are all Indictments that are rather provoking
than convictive, and more likely to exasperate
than do any service. So that I must here remind
him of his promise to revoke. He'll say, per-
haps, he was only aiming to convince us, that
this could not be the likeliest way to bring those from
whom we differ to such a Temper of Accommodation,
and such a yielding Disposition as we wish, and as
there must be, before this farther Reformation can be
accomplish'd.

But he should have consider'd, whether the
 Body of the Dissenters are chargeable with the
 Provocations mention'd; and whether other
 things than these did not hinder the making need-
 ful Amendments in 1661 and 1689. For if the
 Body is not chargeable, they should not suffer for
 the Faults of particular Persons. And if other
 things hindred any farther Reformation at those
 two seasonable Junctures for it, he should lay the
 blame on those to whom it belongs. He tells us,
 Before we can come to Amendments, *Mens Minds*
must be disposed to that Work, and made easie and
yielding. We were inclin'd to hope, we must
 confess,

confess, not only upon general Appearances, but many express Promises to that purpose, that this *easy and yielding* Disposition would have been the consequence of our Correspondence in our common Danger in the Reign of King *James II.* but we found our selves disappointed. He goes on: *They must be void of Passion and Prejudice, for fear they should make such Alterations as are not reasonable, or resist and prevent such as are.* So that it should seem if we would be likely to compass the farther Reformation desir'd, we must take some course to cure the *Passion and Prejudice* of the Conforming Clergy. But I would be glad, that Gentleman would have told us what course that must be; for we find so much of it remaining among themselves, as they are divided into Parties and Factions, even under the Constitution, that we who are out of it have little hope of succeeding in any attempts that way. He adds, *Nothing of Hatred, or the least degrees of private Resentment and Anger, must have place where such a Design is on foot.* Which is as if he had said, We must be free from Personal Imperfections, before it can be hoped any thing can be done towards the making the Constitution more agreeable to the Rule of Scripture. And if this be indeed absolutely necessary, we'll grant there's but little likelihood of a farther Reformation. But I should think, while they (to say no more) have in this respect like Imperfections with us, we might be allow'd to stand upon a level. But then he tells us, *Our Method tends to Passion, and Prejudice, and Resentment, but can never have the least part in making Men pliable and easy, in disposing them to recede from any thing, to make the smallest Concessions, or give up a Point of the least importance.* Pray, Sir, what Method could our Fathers have taken, in 1661, more likely to prevail

vail for Amendments, than what they took in the *Savoy-Conference*? What Method could have been taken more likely to reach the same end, than the Carriage of the generality of the Dissenters in the Reign of King *James II*? And yet we find a great many things *binder'd considering Men from promoting* the necessary *Alterations*. We find other things besides the Carriage of the Complainers, render'd the two Convocations, in 1661 and 1689, *unwilling and indisposed to encourage a farther Reformation*. Of how great moment soever the *Perfection of a Church* may appear, many things *diverted them from pressing towards it*. As for those who *seriously desire an Accommodation*, by a greater conformity to the Scripture Rule, they took no *Methods* in order to it, as I know of, which that Rule will not justify. If a fair Representation of their case would *anger and incense, provoke and irritate*, 'tis a sign they had to do with those, who were more concern'd to justify themselves, than Reform the Church: And if a modest Complaint of real Hardships and Injuries, in order to their being redress'd, was esteem'd an *inveighing against the Cause and Behaviour* of our Brethren, and hinder'd from *Concord* upon Scripture Terms, 'tis a sign they were more desirous, the Division should be perpetuated than healed, unless there were on our side a compliance against our Consciences.

What follows some would think tends to *incense and inflame*, and therefore, according to * promise, should be *revok'd and alter'd*: But for fear he should have another apprehension of it, as it stands in his own Book, I'll take leave to present him with it in mine, that he may the better judge of the agreeableness of such Language.

p. 122.

* Adm.
pag. 37.

As for you, Gentlemen, of the *Church of England*, who talk so much of Peace and Union, and blame others as hindring it, your Carriage is utterly unaccountable. For there is hardly any thing that hath the least tendency to promote this desir'd Union, and in order to it, to soften the Hardnesses, to cool the Heats, to engage the Affections of any on whom this Concord must depend; there is hardly any thing of this nature that you have thought fit to do. But there is hardly any thing that tends to keep us at a distance from one another, and hinder this Agreement; that tends to inflame the Passions of those you differ from, to make them jealous and fearful of a closer Union with you, to render them suspicious of your Tempers and Designs, and disengage their Affections from you, but that you have thought it worth your while to practice it, under your Constitution, and in the Methods you have taken to support and perpetuate it. As if it had been your business to do what you knew would be most grievous in their Eyes, and your resolution to vex them as much as possible, since they would not agree with you; and as if the interchanging of such good Offices were likely to prove the readiest way to settle a good Correspondence between you, or to bring you one step nearer to one another.

After all, Mr. Hoadly can't believe our Separation hath any tendency towards the procuring Alterations. But what must we do, Sir? Our Forefathers kept in your Church, while they disapprov'd your Bottom. They comply'd in a great measure with your Impositions, and in the midst of their many Complaints, had frequent Promises that their Grievances should be redress'd, which Promises still prov'd fruitless. They held on Conforming as far as their Consciences would allow them; and because they did not fully answer the Demands of the Church, they were
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teaz'd and worry'd, silenc'd and excommunicated; and both Ministers and People most miserably harras'd. 'Twas found therefore by many Years experience, the way of Conformity would not compass the needful Alterations. After the Restauration of King *Charles*, the Confinement was straiter, and the Bonds made heavier than they were before. Many hundreds of worthy Ministers were thrown out at once; and the poor People depriv'd of their desirable and useful Labours. In this case, they took the liberty which God had given them, of shifting for themselves out of the Constitution, professing a readiness to coalesce either with those that were under that Constitution, or any other Party of Men who separated from it upon Scripture terms and grounds, but no farther. And if the bringing such a number of valuable Persons into the public Churches won't, at some time or other, prevail with the Government to purge out those Corruptions which have been so long complain'd of, and heartily to espouse the cause of a farther Reformation, it is very unlikely that any thing else would ever occasion it. If the Separation of the Dissenters ben't a likely way, sooner or later, to effect a farther Reformation, I despair of finding any way by which those who go under that Denomination could be able to do any thing to contribute towards it.

But says Mr. *Hoadly*, supposing Amendments p. 124. made, and *the Ministers brought in, yet God only knows, as the Cause hath been unhappily manag'd, whether this would so mightily contribute to the universal Union of this Church and People, as one would wish, or some expect. If God only knows it, then I think to him we must leave it. Yet this I'll venture to say, The People, as far as I can judge, are much more concern'd about Abatements and*

P. 125.

Alterations, than he seems willing to allow; and I believe may, without much difficulty, be very generally brought towards the Church, when the Church shall be brought towards a nearer Conformity to Scripture. If *the way of Worship*, in which our People are settled, be only different from yours in those respects in which yours is different from the Rule and Patterns of Scripture, and this appears upon search, I hope our People can't justly be blamed if they are willing to adhere: But if, on the contrary, it can be made appear that we differ from Scripture, in the things wherein we differ from you, our People, I verily believe, are not generally so unreasonably tenacious, as to persist when a foundation is once laid for their Conviction. But why you should use the word *must* in this case, till the Point is decided which way of Worship is most agreeable to Scripture, yours or ours, I cannot tell; unless it be a fair intimation, that you are for determining by bare Authority, what we are for leaving to be determin'd by Scripture and Reason. That a *stated Form of Prayer*, if serious and scriptural, and suited to the Circumstances and Occasions of the generality of Christians, is so *heavy a Dispensation*, as not to be compar'd with the meanest *Extemporary Effusion*, so it be but utter'd with *vebementence and zeal*, is what I know none of our Ministers that teach; what I never heard any even the weakest of our People assert: And yet that Christ hath given Power to any, so to confine his Ministers and Servants to a Form in publick worshipping Assemblies, as that they may be allow'd in no case to vary, is what should be prov'd by those that assert it.

But that our People can't bear the *Thoughts of a Church in which so much as the Name of Bishops is found*, is an high flight. They can bear both

both name and thing : For they own their Pastors to be Bishops ; and submit to them as those *whom the Holy Ghost hath made Overseers*. And there are many of them that have no incurable Aversion to Superintendents or Arch-Bishops, that should have a Power of Inspecting the Doctrine and Lives of their Pastors, Provided due security could be given there should be no unscriptural Impositions that way introduc'd or favour'd. So that I can't see any reason for Mr. *Hoadly's* mighty concern upon this Head. For, let but the *Liturgy* and *Episcopacy* retain'd, be Scriptural, and there may be fair Hopes of a General Compliance. And as for those who should remain dissatisfy'd, Let them but have the Liberty of their own way, without any Force, and all will be easie, and none can complain ; and this is the only way we know of to an *universal Concord and Unity*, as far as it is here attainable. When he afterwards tells us, *That the Conformity and Unity of the People are the greatest Perfection of a Church*, we can easily agree with him if he means the *Conformity of the People*, in their Worship, Tempers and Lives, to the Rule of the Gospel, and their *Unity* in true Christian Affection : But if he means. a *Conformity* to any Humane Models, and an *Unity* in Rites and Ceremonies, we are far from reckoning them to contribute to the *Perfection of a Church*. And we give this good Reason for it, Because the *Church* was in the Apostles days in the *greatest Perfection*: But this lay in a *Conformity* to Divine Regulations, and not Humane Inventions, in an *Unity* of Affections, and not an *Uniformity* in Ceremonies. And withal, We find there may be *Conformity* and *Unity*, even in the Church of *Antichrist* ; and therefore we can't see how bare *Conformity* and *Unity*, unless the Scripture be admitted as the en-

ture Standard of it, can be accounted *the greatest Perfection* of a Protestant Church, without a Reflection on the *Reformation*.

But since he gives us *the sum of what he has propos'd under this Head* in a single Syllogism; let us a little consider it. It runs thus: *Mutual Concessions, and a yielding Spirit, are necessary to the propos'd Alterations.* Now the Method you have taken is not at all likely to produce such Concessions, or to incline Men to yield the most indifferent Points, but rather to make them jealous and suspicious of you, and incense them against you; and is so far from being ever likely to unite the People to the Church, that it is rather to be fear'd it hath laid the Scheme of perpetual Division, and a continu'd Separation, even supposing such Alterations in the Church as would content you. Therefore your Separation, and the Method you have taken to maintain it on foot, is as unlikely as possible, to effect this farther Reformation, or ever to bring about the Union and Agreement of the Christian People in this Land. I answer; Tho' Mutual Concessions are necessary to an Union, as far as the Scripture will warrant them, yet since that is to be the common Standard which you and we are to endeavour to come up to, we are not left at uncertainty. As for the Method we have taken to conform our selves as near as we can to the Rule of Scripture, while our Brethren would not bear us company, nay would rather have persuaded us to rest satisfy'd under their Irregularities; if this is not at all likely to produce Concessions, or to incline our Brethren to yield the most indifferent Points, we cannot help it; since, as far as we can judge, we have done but our Duty. But we will hope better things of our Brethren, when they come calmly to consider Matters. We would hope they could not think this a good Argument against a nearer Conformity

mity to Scripture, that we were herein in some respects before-hand with them; and acted without their leave, which we could not discern we were bound to wait for. However, if our being here in any measure before-hand with them should *make them jealous and suspicious of us, and incense 'em against us*, they must answer for it to their Lord and ours, with whom we can contentedly lodge our Appeal. But we cannot as yet perceive but that our Method will be *likely enough to unite the People to the Church*, whenever the Church can be content to conform to the holy Scriptures. Nor can we *fear perpetual Division upon our Scheme*, if those Impositions are but wavy'd that have occasion'd the Divisions. And therefore tho' the Method we have taken is not likely to produce a general Conformity to the Church, as it stands at present bottom'd upon a pretended *Power to Decree Rites and Ceremonies*, which we cannot esteem at all desirable, we yet conclude, that if the repeated desires of a number of sober Persons, who insist upon a greater Conformity to Scripture before they can in Conscience embody themselves with the Church, won't prevail some time or other for a farther Reformation, in order to a greater *Union and Agreement of the Christian People in this Land*, nothing else that could be mention'd would be able to do it.

At last he's for *inverting the Argument*, and accosts us thus: *If the consideration of obtaining Amendments hath been of that mighty force with you, as to move you to venture upon a thing of such Consequence, as a formal Separation, and a distinct way of publick Worship from that establish'd; of how much greater force ought this consideration to have been, in the moving you to a quiet and peaceable Conformity, as far as your Consciences could give you leave? I answer; Being convinc'd it was our Duty to en-*

p. 130

deavour a nearer Conformity to Scripture, we were the more confirm'd in that intention, in hopes that it might prove as likely a way as any, in time, to effect a farther Reformation in the Land in general. We can't see there was any great *venture* in the case, (even tho' the consent of Ecclesiastical Superiors was wanting) supposing that by our Separation we have in any measure reach'd a nearer Conformity to Scripture than our Brethren, which may be judg'd of by the Premises. That this Consideration could ever bring us to entire Conformity to the Church upon its present Bottom, is unreasonable to suppose. For this, whatever it was heretofore, would, as things now stand, have been a yielding to that imposing Power, which we were convinc'd it was our Duty to oppose. But that it should bring us to such a Conformity as our *Consciences could give leave for*, is reasonable enough to expect: And therefore it may be observ'd it brought those to *Occasional Conformity* whose Consciences could allow of it. To which Inclination and Practice they were encourag'd, by hoping, both that it would be taken by their Brethren as an evidence of their charitable Disposition towards them, while they ordinarily worshipp'd God in a way they thought more agreeable to his Mind and Will; and that their Brethren might this way be the more dispos'd in time to abate those Rigors, which had been attended with such pernicious Consequences. Mr. *Hoadly* indeed, by arguing for *Conformity as far as our Consciences would give leave*, may perhaps mean entire Conformity; as thinking Conscience had nothing against it. In which he is under a considerable Mistake. But I would desire him to observe, that by *Conforming Occasionally*, we have gone as far as our *Consciences would give leave*, and yet we find

find the *end in view as far from being accomplish'd*, as if we had kept at the greatest distance from them. Our Brethren are so far from being hereby the more disposed to Union upon Scripture Terms, that they hereupon most grossly misrepresent us, and inveigh against us with strange Bitterness and Rancor, as if it were pure Fancy that we could not always do as they do, because we can do it upon Occasion; in which I can *appeal as freely as Mr. Hoadly himself, to the Reason and Experience of Mankind*, whether they don't act very disingenuously and unworthily. But he adds in the

Fifth and Last place, That if the pressing a farther Reformation be a good argument for a Separation, then there will always be a necessity for one, and always a Reason sufficient to uphold and excuse it. I answer; If he means, that then no Man is to be hindred from worshipping God in that way that he apprehends most agreeable to his Mind and Will, (provided the Civil Peace be not endanger'd) I freely grant it him: But if his meaning be, That if our Separation now be justifiable, 'tis impossible that any Reformation could be such as should leave a like Separation unjustifiable, I deny it. For we separating in order to the removing unscriptural Impositions, let them but be remov'd, and tho' there may be still a difference in some lesser Particularities, yet a Separation is needless. But, says he, *I may safely affirm, that neither you, nor any Man else in the World, can contrive such a Church, or lay the Scheme of such a Constitution, that a farther Reformation shall not be necessary in order to the more general reaching of the great ends of Religion.* And if so, I should think it might abate the eagerness of considering Men, for a *National Ecclesiastical Constitution.* For to any that are at liberty duly to weigh Matters,
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it must needs appear an unspeakable Hardship for any Churches of Christ to be so hamper'd by a *Constitution*, as that they can't be still pursuing a *farther Reformation*, as far as it evidently appears *necessary in order to the more general reaching of the great ends of Religion*. Any *Constitution* that should herein be an hindrance, is a manifest Detriment to Religion. Therefore I hope we may be excus'd in being against any such *Constitution*. to fall in with which we cannot see that any Mortals have a right to compel us. But he goes on: *Had such Amendments and Alterations as we are often told would have contented you, and brought you in, been accepted of in the establish'd Church, you cannot say that it would have wanted nothing in order to the more general reaching the great ends of Religion; and yet you would have Conform'd, and pleaded the Cause of Conformity. If then you should upon such Amendments have thought it your Duty to have Conform'd to the Establishment, notwithstanding the want of a farther Reformation in order, &c. it cannot certainly be judg'd by you a good Argument for a Separation, that a farther Reformation is necessary in order, &c.* I answer; Let but Persons be left free as to the things that have been hitherto imposed; and let nothing be inforc'd that presses upon the Conscience; and it would be hard for any Persons to give a reason why they mayn't worship God in the publick Churches, as well as in separate Assemblies. Could this have been compass'd, the Dissenters would have been contented and thankful; nay they would yet be so. And if the worshipping God with this freedom in the publick Churches, and persuading others to do so too, be call'd *Conforming*, and pleading the *Cause of Conformity*, 'tis well and good; 'tis freely yielded this would have been the Consequence. But if by *Conforming and pleading the Cause*

Cause of Conformity, it be meant, that they who are now Dissenters would have own'd an imposing Power, and persuaded others to it also; if it be hereby intended to be intimated, that if they could have compass'd certain particular Amendments and Alterations, they would not only have submitted to remaining unscriptural Impositions, but have urg'd others to it that had been inclined to stand out, 'tis both an absurd Supposition in it self, and a groundless Imputation upon them. 'Tis an absurd Supposition in it self. For it implies, that they insist upon that liberty which Christ hath left them, and yet are free to resign it, if they are gratify'd in certain Particularities: Nay it implies, that they are admitted into the publick Churches, without submitting to a pretended Ecclesiastical Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies; and yet that they own that Power duly exercis'd in certain Instances that are retain'd, and persuade others to do so too, that they may have liberty of getting into or keeping in the Churches. And it is a groundless Imputation upon the Dissenters, both Ministers and People, for which I cannot discern the least foundation: For I know not that it has ever been pretended, that any *Amendments and Alterations* would have brought them in, which left them not at liberty as to the Impositions complain'd of. Nor can it be prov'd, that they ever offer'd to *Conform or plead the Cause of Conformity*, without such a liberty. But here lies the Mistake. Mr. Hoadly does not distinguish between coming ordinarily to Church, and approving of the National Constitution. Had King Charles II.'s Declaration pass'd into a Law, the generality of those who were afterwards Dissenters had ordinarily gone to the publick Churches, without ordinarily keeping up separate Assemblies: But they had not

still heartily approv'd of the National Constitutionⁿ. There would have been a Considerable Advance^e made towards a farther Reformation, and there would have been room left for a farther Advance by Degrees, which is the most that can be hop'd for. Let us then see how he argues. *If you could, upon some Alterations, by which you had been left at Liberty as to the Impositions complain'd of, have complied, so far as to have come ordinarily to the Publick Churches, without being under the Exercise of an unscriptural imposing Power, though other Alterations in the Constitution would have been necessary to the End mention'd; then it is certainly Lawful for you to Comply, so as to come constantly to Church, though the Alterations which you most wish be not made; i, e. though in so doing you must go farther than your Consciences could give Leave: Let the matter be consider'd as thus stated, and I'm perfectly at a loss for his conclusion; therefore it cannot be your Duty to separate because these Alterations are not yet obtain'd.* That he may see the weakness of his Argument, I'll suppose a few serious Christians, at the Beginning of K. Edward the Sixth's Reign, in the Dawning of the Reformation of the Church of England, to have had an opportunity of attending on the Labours of a Minister of the Reform'd Religion, as it has since been settled in this Land; and if I mistake not it will upon search be found, that what he has said would have been of as great force to engage such Persons to acquiesce under the Popish superstitions, as it can have to induce the Dissenters to rest satisfy'd under the Unscriptural Impositions of the Present National Constitution. Let us suppose then that a number of serious Christians at the time mention'd, apprehended it their Duty to separate from their Parish Churches, that they might

might that way press towards a farther Reformation in Ecclesiastical matters as necessary in Order to the more general reaching the Great Ends of Religion. 'Tis query'd whether their Procedure had been warrantable? And I must needs say, I think upon Mr. Hoadly's Principles, the Answer must have been in the Negative. For he might with equal Reason have said to them, as he does to us: *If you could upon some Alterations have comply'd, though other Alterations in the Constitution would have been necessary for the end mention'd; then it is certainly Lawful for you to comply, though the Alterations which you most wish, be not made; and therefore it cannot be your duty to separate because these Alterations are not yet obtain'd. For this Argument goes no farther, than the want of such Alterations as are necessary to the more general reaching the great Ends of Religion; and supposing the Alterations you desire, to be such, it cannot be accounted by you necessary to separate, because these are not made; since you would conform if these were accepted, and yet others of the same sort would certainly be still wanting. Whatever depends so much upon the Prudence and Contrivance of Imperfect, fallible, short sighted creatures, as the Constitution of a National Church doth, must, without doubt, have some marks of their imperfection upon it, and cannot be devis'd so perfect, and compleat, that nothing can be added to it, which may be truly said to be necessary to the more general reaching the great Ends of Religion. It can hardly be suppos'd that such a Perfection can be attain'd in any Church on Earth, that it may be with truth affirm'd, that nothing necessary to that end is wanting. Much less can it be suppos'd, that such a perfection can be attain'd in any Establishment, that many Persons shall not Imagine many necessary things to be wanting in it, and many things in it very much out of order,*

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and very much amiss. If this Plea therefore be admitted as sufficient to justify a separation, a wide door is open'd to numerous and endless Separations: For as long as Imperfection belongs to the nature of Man, so long will it belong to any Constitutions that depend upon the Prudence and Wisdom of Man. This should indeed be no Objection against the making nearer and nearer approaches to Perfection, against making any such Alterations at any time, as are apparently for the encreasing the beauty of a Church, and tend to the more general reaching the great ends of Religion; because it is certainly the Duty of every Christian, who hath it in his power, to press towards those ends, and to do all lawful things towards the compassing of them, and to consult the Honour of God and the Christian Church. But then, supposing these Alterations not made, but resisted, and rejected, this will not justify a Separation, unless you will lay it down as a good Principle, that Separation is necessary, whenever a Church is Imperfect, and will not admit of such Amendments as we think necessary. If this sort of Language have any force in the Case of our Present Dissenters, I can't see but it would have had equal force against those who were rather for sitting down under Reform'd Pastors in the beginning of the Reign of King Edward the Sixth, than for going to their Parish Churches, which had so much remaining impurity: Nay it would rather have been of greater force in their Case, in as much as the Government appear'd then intent upon a farther Reformation, to which there is not now the least inclination discernible. And if Mr. Hoadly's Principles condemn such Persons as well as us, I think they are very fit to be re-examin'd.

But I shall add, that whereas he seems to lay considerable stress upon this, that *this Argument goes no farther than the want of such Alterations as*

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are necessary to the more general reaching the great ends of Religion, he may without straining very well suppose, that the Alterations intended are suppos'd to be in Conformity to the sacred Scriptures. And tho' 'tis true as he intimates, that People may in many cases groundlessly *imagine many necessary things wanting in a Church*; yet may there be other cases where they may be able to prove the truth of their Supposition. If this Proof be good, he'd be hard put to it to prove the Separation unwarrantable; nay, or not to be a Duty: And tho' their Proof be defective, yet I should apprehend they were bound to act herein according to their Consciences, till a foundation were laid for their Conviction. His Absurdity which he charges upon us, that according to our Notion, *we can't communicate with any Church in the World*, has been answer'd before: And it has been also shewn *why we don't separate from our own Churches*. Tho' they are, it is true, imperfect, yet we are at liberty to keep them free from unscriptural Impositions; and may be improving in our conformity to Scripture, without any hindrance from our Constitution, if we are but duly mindful of our Duty, and careful to put it in Practice.

As for our *separating in opposition to such as think the Church so Perfect as to stand in need of no Amendments*, I can't see that it is either so *unreasonable or wild* as he is willing to have it suppos'd, provided it be taken rightly. For nothing's plainer than that while many in the Church have been all along willing for Alterations and Amendments, there had yet been a strong Faction that has still oppos'd. Whether they did it as thinking the Church needs no Amendments, or as thinking the Amendments propos'd needless, is not very material: Tho' the former seems to us
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the natural Language of the pompous Commendations continually given to their Constitution, with all its Forms, Ceremonies, and Appendages; and of the Contempt with which those are continually treated that move for Alterations. Now all that is meant by separating from the Church, in opposition to this Faction, is only this, That we think our selves oblig'd to let them see, by our firm adherence to our Principle of the necessity of a more scriptural Reformation, that it is a vain thing for them to expect we should ever fall in with them, while they stand upon the Bottom of an unprov'd Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies; the fancy'd Right to which Power is that which buoys them up in opposition to all motions for any Alterations. We don't separate from the Church *because there are Men of little Judgment and strong Passions in it, or because there are weak Men and Men guilty of Errors that hold Communion with it*: But being convinc'd we ought to come nearer to Scripture, we are the more confirm'd in doing it as we can, in our separate Congregations, by our observing the strong prevalence of that Faction in the Church which is against Amendments; which has so far gotten the ascendant, as to make a farther Reformation in the Church hopeless, unless they should be necessitated to it, in order to the common Safety. So that the Gentleman having in this respect mistaken our real sense, what he mentions as to our separate Churches by way of parallel, plainly appears utterly foreign to the purpose.

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Well then, let us see, in short, how the matter stands. Mr. Hoadly declares, that *there never was, is, or will be, a National Constitution so perfect, but that something may be added to it, and something necessary to a more general reaching the great*

great ends of Religion. I answer; For my part I can see no valuable end that can be aim'd at by any such *National Ecclesiastical Constitution*, as should hinder particular Churches from any thing to which they incline in order to a greater conformity to Scripture. And let but the Constitution leave that liberty, and let each Church discharge their Duty with Diligence and Care, and yet with Temper and Moderation; let each Church make the Scripture their Rule and Standard rather than any humane Devices; let these Churches have a due Correspondence with all the Churches in the Land; let the Civil Magistrate duly discountenance and punish Vice and Immorality; and I can't see how any thing is *wanting which is necessary to the more general reaching the great ends of Religion*, unless the sacred Scriptures are defective in point of Direction. But, says Mr. Hoadly to this, *I have seen and heard too much of the nature and evil consequences of Separation, to give such an encouragement to it as is included in this Argument.* 'Tis reply'd; That when there are Consequences that deserve to be consider'd on both sides, 'tis not the part of a wise Man to confine himself to those on one hand only.

In order to the passing a right Judgment in such a case, I think our way would be this: To compare together the Consequences of a Separation in order to a nearer conformity to Scripture, and the consequences of a forcible compliance with a fix'd Constitution, on the part of those who are firmly persuaded, that by falling in with it, they should unduly uphold unscriptural Impositions. And I think I may be bold to say, That the Consequences that naturally arise from forcing People into a way and method of Worship which they apprehend less agreeable to the

Mind and Will of God, are far worse than can with any justice be charg'd on a liberty to keep by themselves in a way and method of Worship which they esteem more agreeable to Reason and Scripture. By using this liberty, which we conceive all Men have a right to, we don't *contradict and resist our Brethren at the expence of Peace and Unity*; (that's only an invidious Phrase to serve a turn) but we are ready to cultivate *Peace and Union* with our Brethren, without enslaving our Consciences, and are ready to go as far with them as we can have the Scriptures bearing us company; and there they must excuse us if we leave them. In the mean time, while we are engag'd in *pressing a farther Reformation*, many of us can communicate Occasionally with any Church that hath not Idolatry in its Worship; and statedly with any Church that makes no unscriptural Terms of Communion; and that is not hinder'd from reforming it self in conformity to Scripture, by a subjection to a pretended Power of imposing Rites and Ceremonies.

p. 139.

Upon the whole then; since tho' *we and our People might continue in the Communion of the Church of England, without thinking it so perfect as to need no Amendments*; yet we can't see how we can entirely fall in with it, without supporting those who have oppos'd Amendments, when the most fitting Opportunities for them have offer'd; and that way in effect forsaking the Cause we are engag'd in; Since the Moderate Nonconformists, tho' they *have not attain'd to Perfection*, (which it would be a vain thing for any to pretend to here below) have yet escaped many of the Irregularities and Disorders, which have all along been most justly complain'd of in the Church of *England*; and are more conformable to the Rule of Scripture in fundry things than they: Since the

the separating from such a Church as ours in order to a farther Reformation, is so far from *a doing evil that good may come*, as to be an act p. 140. which when done conscientiously, is highly pleasing to God: And since it is of *two Evils a choosing the least*; inasmuch as it is a far less Evil to separate from a Church fix'd on an unscriptural Bottom, wherein, after so long waiting, there appears little or no hope of Amendment, than it is for Men to sin against their Consciences, by constantly communicating with it, to the hindrance of their own Purity, greater Conformity to the Scripture Rule, and Christian Edification; Since *the Method we have taken* hath render'd us Dissenters more free from unwarrantable Impositions, and more agreeable to the Rule of Scripture than we could otherwise have been; and at the same time hath the directest tendency to promote a more general Reformation, of any Method we could have taken: And lastly, Since there may be just ground for separating from a Church that p. 141. is incurably fond of unscriptural Impositions, tho' there be not from a Church that leaves all in possession of that liberty, to which our Blessed Lord hath given his Followers an undoubted Right: These things being clear, I think it is sufficiently evident, that the honest People who adher'd to the ejected Ministers, in pursuit of the Cause of a farther Reformation, acted not without good reason.

I must confess, for my part, I can't see but that notwithstanding any thing Mr. *Hoadly* hath alledg'd in his Verbose Reflections, it was a very justifiable Reason (among several others) for private Christians in 1662, to adhere to their old Ministers, that they should this way be pressing towards that farther Reformation, which it was many ways evident was so necessary. Nor can I

discern but that the Argument is to this day cogent ; and the more so, in that we have since then had a fresh evidence upon the late glorious Revolution, of the backwardness of the dignify'd Clergy to any such Reformation. So that if all should acquiesce in things as they now are, it would be utterly hopeless in any time to come.

p. 142.

Another Reason that has been given by the People for their Nonconformity to the Church of England, upon the Alteration in 1662, is this : *Finding that it was the Duty of their Ministers, tho' silenc'd by the Magistrates, to continue in the exercise of their Ministry, they were convinc'd they were oblig'd therein to support and encourage them.* To which Mr. Hoadly thus replies : *If (says he) I have before shewn, that it is not the Duty of the Dissenting Ministers to continue in the exercise of their Ministry, then it will follow, that the People are not therein oblig'd to support and encourage them.* Which being freely granted him, I hope I may by a parity of Reason be allow'd to say ; That if I have before shewn, that it is the Duty of the Dissenting Ministers to continue in the exercise of their Ministry, then it will follow, that the People are therein oblig'd to support and encourage them. And whether I have shewn this or no, I am as free as he can be *to leave to others.* Tho' I'll grant, as he says, *That supposing this Conclusion is justly drawn, yet if the Proposition on which it depends be not true, it must fall with it ;* yet having before prov'd the Proposition whence this Conclusion is drawn to be true, I am now ready to prove that Conclusion justly drawn ; so that both Proposition and Conclusion stand together on the Bottom of Truth, which is sufficiently able to support them.

p. 143.

But

But he objects this way of Arguing is full of fallacy. I can only say, that when that is evidenc'd, I freely agree that it be discarded; but not till then. To prove it, he thus bespeaks the Ejected Ministers: *If the People be not on other Accounts oblig'd to attend upon your Ministrations, you cannot say, that they are oblig'd to it merely to support and Encourage you; nor would they ever do it for that reason only. And if they be not oblig'd to it merely to support and encourage you, then this Argument signifies nothing to their Justification. Nay you know that they do, and always did attend upon you on other Accounts, and you know that they are worthy of blame if it were otherwise.* Let any Man Judge say I, whether this or the other, be the more fallacious Arguing. It was not pretended the People were oblig'd to attend the Labours of the Ejected Ministers, merely to support and encourage them; and for that Reason only. It is here suppos'd that they had reason to value their Labours, by which they had profited; and that they were convinc'd of the Justice of the cause for which they suffer'd; which was that of adhering to a more *Scriptural Reformation* and that they were convinc'd of their own obligation to engage, in the same Cause: This being evidenc'd, in conjunction with the Obligation of the Ministers to continue their Labours as opportunity offer'd, it necessary follows, that all thus perswaded were bound so far to *support and encourage them*, as to give them an opportunity of Exercising their Ministry, by attending chearfully on their Labours; aye and to *maintain* them too, as they were able; which is a Consideration that deserves a Particular Place in their Case, who with their Families were sought to be beggard and starv'd by those in Power. All this has been before consider'd, and and 'tis fallacious here to exclude it; and to harp upon bare *support and encouragement*, where the

stress was not laid, separately from the other Considerations. Though the People were suppos'd to attend upon their Ministers on other Accounts, and were to blame if it were otherwise, yet still their supporting and encouraging them is it self a Duty, if they found reason to Conclude that the Cause which they sufferd for was just, and that they were oblig'd to stand by that Cause. Though their Publick Ministrations were not absolute, 'tis true, but bore a Relation to the People, yet I hope if it can be made appear, that the People were oblig'd to give them that opportunity for exercising their Ministry, which they, when it offer'd, were bound to embrace, it may pass for a very good Reason, why they did give them such an opportunity for it, which is the thing here aim'd at. Though the Ejected, could not prove a Necessity upon themselves to Minister, but upon supposition of the Necessitys of the People, and their readiness to wait upon them; for no Man can be bound to what is impossible: Yet it does not follow but it might be the Duty of those among the People, that were convinc'd of the Justice of the Cause they were engag'd in, to be ready to wait upon them, as he expresses it; or rather to give them opportunity to exercise their Ministry; which is the thing here under Consideration. Had all the Inhabitants of the Land indeed thought their necessities fully supply'd in other ways; and so turn'd their backs upon the Ejected Ministers, tis granted they had not been oblig'd to preach in Publick to Bare Walls: But had those Persons slighted and disown'd them, who were convinc'd of the Justice of their Cause, and who were heartily engag'd in the same Cause of a farther Reformation in opposition to the design of Perpetuating unscriptural Impositions, had these Persons refus'd to hear the Ejected Ministers, while they were wil-

ling to preach if they had but an opportunity, they had not discharg'd their Duty. For they were in this Case oblig'd to *support and encourage* them: and the Gentlemans Argument against it is so abstruse, that I must confess I'm at a loss for the force of it. For had all the People of *England* refus'd to hear the silenc'd Ministers, and so incapacitated them to hold on in their Ministry, it is not pretended, that this would *have hindred them from what they were oblig'd to do*: For it is own'd *their Readiness to Minister was the whole of their Duty*. But still those People must fail in their Duty, who tho' Sensible they were oblig'd to oppose the unscriptural Impositions of the Church, should refuse to attend on the Labours of the silenc'd Ministers, under whom they might According to their desire have had the Ordinances of God free from such Impositions, and according to the Original settlement. And this Mr. Hoadly has unhappily overlook'd. p. 144.

But to go on: That if the People thought their *Necessitys could be better supply'd by others than by these silenc'd Ministers, they ought to follow those others*, is granted: But how it thence follows, that they who found Reason peculiarly to value the Labours of those Ministers ought to turn their backs upon them; or that they who were upon Principle Hearty in the same Cause with them were not oblig'd to attend upon them in order to *support and encourage them in their Duty*, I cant Imagine. Mr. Hoadly *entreates them to think of this*, but I profess I see not to what purpose. Why might they not deal fairly in this Cause, without being oblig'd to deny either the one or the other? for why might it not be the Duty of those among the People who were Hearty in their Cause to *support and encourage* these Ministers; and yet it be allowable nay and their Duty too to go

where According to their Apprehension *their necessities could best be supply'd*? where's the inconsistency? Though it were allowable for them to have left these Ministers, in order to have their Necessities better supply'd; yet certainly when they saw no such Prospect elsewhere, and had both Reason peculiarly to value their Labours themselves, and to adhere to the Cause they were engag'd in; Certainly I say in such a Case, (which is no other than what is here suppos'd if Mr. Hoadly would but have observ'd it) it might be *their Duty to support and encourage them by their Attendance upon them*, without any the least inconsistency. So that there appears no reason either to Relinquish this Argument, or to give up that Popular Plea of Edification, and the natural Right of every Man to choose his own Pastor: For they are easily reconcil'd. The People that adher'd to the silenc'd Ministers, did both choose their own Pastors, and they chose those for such, under whom they apprehended they should best edify; and finding them so well qualify'd for service, and engag'd in so good a Cause as that of promoting a farther Reformation, they were oblig'd to encourage and support them in their Duty.

Farther, though the Ejected Ministers and their successors too, are perhaps as much concern'd for the Nation we belong to, as our Brethren; yet can we not, as matters now stand, think it would be a very considerable Happiness to it, did all the People constantly attend upon the Publick Worship in the Established Church: For it would in our apprehension effectually obstruct any farther Reformation. Though we pretend not it would endanger their Salvation, yet we are well satisfy'd it would in the case of many, much hinder their own Edification nay which is more as we can judge, it would
being

be so far from being a *mighty advantage*, that it would be a considerable damage, to the *Christian Religion and the Protestant Cause*; it would obstruct Scripture Purity, under the Pretence of promoting *Love and Unity*, which yet would not receive any such advance from thence as is at a distance pretended. Though therefore this Argument talks of *support and encouragement*, which we think we may in the general claim and expect from those that are convinc'd our Cause is just, yet we are far from putting it into the ballance against a *Publick good*. For we look upon the adhering openly to the Cause of a farther Reformation, to be highly for the *publick good*. As for those Private Considerations which Mr. *Hoadly* seems here all along to have his eye upon, by the frequent repetition of the words *support and encouragement*, he must suppose the Dissenting Ministers very weak if they were their Governing Motives: They especially who were cast out of Good Livings, with no other prospect of a future subsistence than uncertain Charity, must scarce have common sense, if they laid any stress upon that little *support* they were likely to get in order to their Subsistence by Nonconformity. No Sir, this is not the matter here depending. The Question is whether the Cause was just, in adhering to which the Ejected Ministers suffer'd so contentedly? If it was, and the People were convinc'd of it, they were bound to adhere to them. If they were satisfy'd a farther Reformation was as necessary as these Ministers pretended, they were bound to give them their Presence and Countenance in pursuit of that Reformation according to Scripture. And their so doing would be so far from *hindring them from pursuing any greater Good*; that it would be the most to the *Advantage of the Protestant Church, and English Nation*, of any method they could

could take. The more we consider this matter, the more are we convinc'd twill hold.

p. 148. Another Argument of the People for their Non-Conformity was taken from their Right to Choose their own Pastors; which According to the Ecclesiastical settlement is invaded. If we are here *Pathe-tical* tis because the Cause will bear it: And Mr. *Hoadly* is not willing therein to come behind, when ever he thinks the subject gives him an opportunity of insinuating into the Affections of the People. But I attend his Answer, which is branch'd into Particulars.

1. He says, *this Right to choose their own Pastor does not According to our selves so belong to the People, that they may not very Lawfully recede from it, upon some Consid.rations; nay that they ought not in Duty to do it.* But supposing it granted there may be some Circumstances, in which it may be *Lawful* for the People to recede from their Right to choose their Pastor at least for a time; it does not therefore follow that any others can warrantably deprive them of that Right, without their Consent, which is that upon which the Debate turns under this Head. A Man has a right to choose his own Physician, and his own Lawyer, not withstanding that there may be some Circumstances, in which it is possible it may be not only Lawful, but his Duty to recede from it in a Particular Case: And he that because this is a possible thing, should go about to deprive him of his Right, would Act injuriously. And the injury is much Higher, when any attempt to impose a Pastor upon a Man, to have the Conduct of his Soul. *Parish Order* indeed has its *Advantages*, and is to be preferred when more weighty *Reasons* do not offer. One great Advantage of it is this; that Neighbourhood of Habitation, gives a Pastor a better opportunity of a Personal inspection of his Flock; and them a better opportunity of discharging several dutys to each other

other than there can be where they live scatter'd and at a distance. But though this is a Convenience, and in it self an advantage, yet where the Parish Minister is notoriously insufficient or Scandalous, or really less likely to edify a Man than another Minister within reach, these are *Sufficiently weighty Reasons* for one that knows he has a right to choose for himself, rather to put himself under the Conduct of another Minister, than of him who is fix'd in that Parish he lives in. But Mr. *Hoadly* takes notice, that *many in our Congregations, often for the sake of Peace, and Love, and Order, think it their Duty, to acquiesce in the Person chosen by the Major Part of the Congregation and yet this Majority hath no more right to impose a Pastor upon the other Part of the Congregation, or upon any one single Person in it, than the Magistrate, or the Bishop, or any Patron hath.* That a Majority in a separate, Congregation cannot warrantably impose a Pastor upon the rest of their Brethren, any more than the Magistrate, Bishop or Patron, can impose a Pastor on all the Inhabitants of such a Parish, I freely grant. If in these separate Congregations, many for the sake of Peace and Love, and Order, think it their Duty to *Acquiesce in the Person chosen by the Major Part*; 'tis as little to be wondred at, as that many that belong to the Parish Churches for the sake of Peace and Love and Order, think it their Duty to *Acquiesce in the Parish Minister*, that is provided by the Magistrate, Bishop or Patron: But it does not from their Apprehension and Practise on either hand follow, that such Compliance in either Case is really matter of Duty. Where Persons are wholly free, and unprovided with a Pastor, I'll grant they should have good reason, before they reject their Parish Minister, if well Qualify'd for his work, and Regular in his Life, and Conforming to the Rule of Scripture

ture in his Ministrations. On the other hand, where Persons join'd together in a separate Congregation are depriv'd of their Pastor, and a Successor is chosen by the majority, I think the rest of them ought to have good reason before they reject him, if he be duly qualify'd, &c. But that 'tis the Duty of the one sort or the other presently to comply, is what must be prov'd by those that should assert it: For my part I dare not undertake it.

Were I a mere private Christian, I should not on one hand think my self oblig'd to own Him for my Pastor, that should claim that Relation to me meerly by vertue of his legal Institution and Induction: And on the other hand, if I were a Member of a separate Congregation, a majority whereof had chosen one for Pastor who was less agreeable to me than another that offer'd; tho' out of my concern for the Welfare of the Congregation, while I retain'd my freedom, I might think fit to try for some time, that I might the more satisfactorily pass a Judgment as to the advisableness or unadvisableness of my acquiescing in him whom the rest had chosen; yet I should be far from thinking it my Duty to follow the majority blindfold. And I could mention several who being chosen Pastors of separate Congregations, have been very free to give a dismissal to such Members of those Societies, as after some time of tryal, have thought it more eligible to transplant themselves into other Congregations: And I must declare I am so much for defending each Christian's Right to choose his Pastor, that I am herein entirely of their mind. I am never for *relinquishing this Right*; nor know I upon what grounds any Man can demand of his Neighbours that they should do it. Suspending the use of it for a season,
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and *relinquishing a Right*, are things very different. p. 150.
 When then the Gentleman desires that *our People would act with respect to the Church of England agreeably to our own Maxim, and our own Practice in our separate Congregations, and then intimates they would readily recede from this Right, and Conform*, he is quite beside the Mark. For we never (as I know of) desire Persons to let others choose a Pastor for them, and quit their Right: We only desire them to suspend the exercise of it for a season; and if upon tryal they find reason to conclude that the attending on another Minister would be more to their Edification, we leave them their full liberty.

Had Mr. *Hoadly* desir'd to draw a Parallel in this case that would bear, it must have been, between the Members of a Parish Church, and the Members of a Dissenting Congregation, upon a Vacancy. that in case of the death of the present Minister, They that used to frequent their Parish Church, should stay to see who is pitch'd upon as a Successor, before they withdraw from it, is but reasonable: And 'tis as reasonable that the Members of a Dissenting Congregation should do the like. *Peace and Order* are here to be consider'd and regarded; tho' not so far as that a Man must renounce his Right to choose for himself; yet so far as that the exercise of that Right is to be for a while suspended: But neither the *Peace and Order* of a particular Congregation, nor of a whole National Church taken together, ought to prevail with a considerate Man so far to renounce his Right to choose for himself, as to bring him to submit to him as his Pastor, of whose unfitness for that Charge he has good evidence, when he has better Provision at hand, and within reach. Tho' it were granted the Dissenters might conform and renounce this Right,
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p. 151.

without *endangering their Salvation*; yet if they should this way but hazard the loss of their greater Edification, it were sufficient reason against their falling in with the Provision of others, if God hath given them a Right to provide for themselves, and they can do it to better advantage. But,

2. He says farther, *That in Parishes, and places where the People choose their own Ministers, there are the greatest Divisions and Quarrels, the greatest Feuds and Passions remarkable, and as unqualify'd Ministers as in other places, &c.* And were this universally true, he has himself in effect sufficiently reply'd to it, in telling us, that he does not argue barely from such ill consequences as these, to shew that any Right is to be given up; for that he is sensible at this rate we might argue our selves out of all Rights; and this would be of the worst consequence imaginable. Which is most undoubtedly true.

p. 152.

If alledging Inconveniencies were sufficient to overthrow the Rights of Men, there could be nothing sure; since there is nothing in the World so just, so reasonable, or so necessary, but the Weakness or the Malice of Men might abuse it. However, I see from this Passage, that tho' there are as ill Consequences, as much Heat and Passion, *Variance, Strife, and Ill-will*, attending Persons exercising their Right, in choosing Mayors and Sheriffs for the City, and Members to represent them in Parliament; as in choosing Ministers to have the care of their Souls; and that Elections in the former case end as often in a bad Choice, and in the alienation of the Minds of many Men from their Brethren, as in the latter; yet there he's for their keeping their Right, without giving it up, tho' not here; and therefore I hope he has some considerable reason for his different measures. As to that, what follows is to account for it. He tells us, *That the consequences of a ge-*
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neral exercise of this Right, (*viz.* of every Man to choose his own Pastor) are worse than any which will follow upon a general acquiescing in the way now settled. But may not another Man with as much reason also say, That the Consequences of Persons general exercising of their Right, in choosing Mayors, Sheriffs, and Representatives in Parliament, are worse than any which will follow upon a general leaving of the Nomination of all to the Prince; which is the way some would before this have settled among us, if they could have had their Wills. But then it is added, *We must take this into the account, that there is such a Provision for the Souls of Men in the Church of England, that they are not in the least danger, or under the least necessity of seeking any farther Assurances in a separate way.* Agreeably whereto, they also that are for the Prince's electing Mayors, Sheriffs and Burgesses to serve in Parliament, are for taking this into the account, that there is such a Provision for Liberty and Property by the Laws of the Land, that Persons are not in the least danger, or under the least necessity of using any precautions to secure their own Right of Election in the case. This Plea appearing to me to be full as plausible as the former, I cannot see why the Citizens of *Londons* (for whom I may be allow'd a little concern, because I had the Happiness to be Born amongst them) may'nt as soon part with their Right to choose their Magistrates and Representatives, as to choose their Ministers.

Tho' therefore Mr. *Hoadly* freely declares, that he does not look upon *this Right*, (for Persons to choose their own Pastors) as of such mighty consequence to the Christian Church, or to the Peoples Souls, as we represent it; yet if a comparison were made, I think it might easily be prov'd
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of as great consequence in a spiritual, as the choice of Magistrates and Representatives is in a temporal respect. And after all, whether the Fact that is alledged under this Head will hold if strictly search'd into, is dubious. The Parish of *Aldermanbury* has the choice of their own Ministers: And I believe there's not a Parish in *London*, be it in the Gift of any Ecclesiastical or Lay Patron, that if we look for an hundred Years back, has successively had better Preachers. I know it to be the same in some few other cases also. And supposing what is farther hinted to be true, *That in the Parishes where the Minister is chosen by the Votes of the People, there be no smaller number of Dissenters than in other Parishes*, yet it does not follow but that several in other Parishes may Dissent, because they cannot in the establish'd way Vote for their Minister; or that more might not turn Dissenters in these very Parishes, if they had their Right taken from them: Neither does it follow but that if the People were generally restor'd to this Privilege, a good step would be taken towards the stopping their Separation. This alone indeed would not do it; but it would help, in conjunction with an answering their other reasonable Demands, and removing their Grievances. But whatever it may be as to others, I'm verily persuaded there are several among the Dissenters so tenacious of this Right of choosing their own Pastors, that without it is yielded them, nothing would contribute to their satisfaction. And, I must confess, I can't see but it may be yielded them, without any infringement of the Right of Patronage, according to the Scheme that was oft propos'd by Mr. *Baxter*. But 'tis added yet farther,

3dly, That the Constitution can never be so order'd, that every particular Christian shall be under the Ministry of the Person whom he would choose before all others. And here he runs into a strait which in me would be call'd Haranguing. The sum of the matter is this: *If Persons are not in any case to suffer a Pastor to be impos'd upon them, there must be Divisions and Schisms numberless, and the Church and Nation must be torn to pieces.* But why so? What need of any such Constitution as should take away Mens Rights? The plain Answer to this Query would leave the matter clear of Difficulty. Or, why was no notice taken of the Scheme I in this case propos'd from Mr. Baxter? Instead of this, he argues with us for not carrying it to the Church of *England*, as we do towards each other in our separate Congregations; which, as far as I can discern, is foreign to the matter in hand, as well as bottom'd upon a Mistake. 'Tis foreign to the matter in hand, because it no way contributes to prove what was under this Head asserted. And 'tis bottom'd upon a Mistake, because the Argument runs upon a supposition that we Dissenters often desire People to renounce their Right to choose a Pastor for themselves, which is a Fancy for which I know not the least foundation. Be it known to you, Sir, our People own no impos'd Pastors of any sort. Let there be a Vacancy in any Congregation, and tho' Ministers recommend, and a Majority choose, yet if there be any to whom the Person chosen is so disagreeable, that they cannot so profitably attend on him as on another, they are free, and and none can justly pretend to hold or detain them. We don't pretend to tell any such, the majority have chosen us, and therefore you must own us for your Pastors; tho' the Clergy of the Church often tell their Parishioners, We are legal

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Incumbents, and therefore you ought to own us. In this case, there needs no such nice enquiry *who are truly qualify'd*; for let a Man be in himself ever so well qualify'd, we see not how his being legal Incumbent any more makes it the necessary Duty of all in the Parish to commit their Souls to him, than among the Dissenters, a Man's being chosen by the majority, makes it the necessary Duty of all the rest to take him for their Pastor, whatever Inconveniencies it might have attending it. But then the great Plea is this: *No stop can ever be put to Separation, if it may be lawfully built on such foundations as this; and therefore this Principle is not what good Christians should use in defence of their Practice.* I answer; Tho' 'tis granted this Principle, in common with many others, is capable of being abus'd; yet it does not follow it is therefore to be discarded. If a Man separates needlessly and unwarrantably in defence of his own Right, he must answer for it: But it does not therefore follow that a Man must renounce his Right to choose a Pastor for himself when others desire it; or that he must commit his Soul to the care of whomsoever the Government shall appoint. This is an inlet to so many Corruptions and Abuses, that the bearing Testimony against it, is it self a piece of publick Service; a greater Service by far than that *Peace* would amount to, which a Man could be supposed to promote by his compliance with insufficient and unqualify'd Pastors; from whom *S. Cyprian* represents it as the Duty of the People to separate: *Ep. 68.*

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In the fourth place then, we are referr'd to Mr. *Baxter's* Advice to his People at *Kedermister*. As to which I desire it may be observ'd, that his particular Judgment, in this or any other case, is of no farther weight with us, than in proportion

tion to the cogency of the Reason that back'd it. Withal; tho' he advis'd them to attend on their Parish Minister upon his removal, yet he left Mr. *Baldwin* amongst them to supply his place, whose continuance there was more safe than his stay among them would have been. And his aim was rather to keep up a charitable Temper among them, than to engage them to resign their Right of choosing their own Pastor, which is the point we are here upon. *If the Parish Minister indeed was not utterly insufficient, or did not preach any thing contrary to the Faith and Practice of Christianity, or did not set himself to oppose serious Godliness;* he then advis'd them to encourage him by attending on his Ministry, and not wholly to absent themselves from the Publick, but to make use of his Labours there, together with what help they had in private from Mr. *Baldwin*, at that time when no publick separate Assemblies would be endured: But that he ever told them, *that they ought not to assert their Right to choose their own Pastor*, I never heard, till I met with it in Mr. *Hoadly*. Many among the Dissenters have acted pursuant to Mr. *Baxter's* Advice. They attended on the best Preachers in the publick Churches, in conjunction with their more private Helps, as long as a *Toleration* was deny'd by the Government. And when they had a *Toleration*, they did not wholly forsake the Churches, but went thither sometimes to shew their Charity, tho' they more stately attended on Pastors of their own choosing, whose Ministrations were free from the publick Corruptions. But 'tis very hard to give satisfaction to those, who will charge Men with *never so much as endeavouring to hear their establish'd Minister*, if they don't think themselves oblig'd to hear him constantly.

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But supposing Mr. *Baxter* had given such Advice to his People at *Kedermister*, as many of the Dissenters had not thought fit to take; how it thence follows, as this Gentleman intimates, that this *Argument*, taken from their Right to choose their own Pastors, signifies nothing to their *Vindication*, I must confess is beyond me to discover. But to his Queries. He asks, *Supposing Persons may leave their Parish Minister, yet where is the necessity of leaving the Church of England?* I answer; Many of the People thought it necessary in order to their having Pastors of their own choosing, while the Church of *England* was for imposing upon them; and I must confess I think there's more in it than Mr. *Hoadly* is willing to allow. He asks, *How does this Argument prove that they ought to betake themselves to separate Congregations, with new Modes of Worship, and new Forms of Government?* I answer; 'Tis enough if it proves, that they are not necessarily bound to acquiesce in the Ministers of the respective Parishes they dwelt in. If so, they are then bound to take care of their Souls, according to the best Judgment God has given them; and so long as they judg'd the way held in the Dissenting Congregations more agreeable to the Rule of Scripture, they were bound by that apprehension rather to take it, than to continue in the establish'd Church. He goes on: *Is there no Minister of the establish'd Church near them, to whom they can resort, sufficient and qualify'd enough to instruct and guide them? And is it not as easie and as lawful for them to go to such an one, as to one of the separate way?* I answer; If they have a Right to choose for themselves, (which is the thing here asserted, and not yet disprov'd) then may they fix on any well qualify'd and duly authoriz'd Minister that offers, be he in the Church or out of it, and com-
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mit the care of their Souls to him; and tho' there may be some *Ministers of the establish'd Church near them*, that were *sufficient and qualify'd enough to instruct and guide them*, yet may they very lawfully rather adhere to thole in a separate way, if that way is more agreeable to the Rule of Scripture; which brings in a necessity of weighing the other Considerations alledg'd in the case. However, that in all parts of the Nation there either were or are sufficient and well qualify'd Ministers of the establish'd Church within reach, is not to me so evident as it seems to be to Mr. Hoadly. He frankly offers, that if I'll prove the contrary; *If I'll but prove that without submitting in many Parishes to unqualify'd Guides, there is no room left by the Law for Ministerial Instruction, and Pastoral Help, he'll become my Convert.* I'll try therefore what I can do, leaving him to his own liberty, as to which I desire not to confine him. That several Parishes have unqualify'd Ministers, no Man can deny: And if this happens in Parishes wide in compass, and remote from any preaching Ministers, I'd fain know what the poor People must do for *Ministerial Instruction, and Pastoral Help*? But supposing their own Parish Minister to be unqualify'd, and that there are others well qualify'd within reach; how can it be made appear that the Law leaves liberty to the People, to leave their own Parish Minister, and resort to their Neighbours for *Ministerial Instruction and Pastoral Help*? 'Tis difficult to reconcile this with *Can. 28.* the Title of which runs thus: *Strangers not to be admitted to Communion*; and in which *Church-wardens, or Questmen, and their Assistants*, are requir'd to mark whether any Strangers come often and commonly from other Parishes to their Church, and to shew their Minister of them, lest perhaps they be admitted to the Lord's Table among others; which they are

charg'd to forbid, and remit such home to their own Parish Churches and Ministers, there to receive the Communion with the rest of their own Neighbours. Agreeably whereto it is order'd, by *Can. 57.* That if any left their own Parish Churches, (thro' dissatisfaction with their unpreaching Ministers) and communicated, or caused their Children to be baptized in other Parishes abroad, they are to be represented to the Ordinary, to receive Punishment by the Ecclesiastical Censures; and if they persist in their wilfulness, to be Suspended; and then after a Months farther obstinacy, to be Excommunicated. And if afterwards any Parson, Vicar, or Curate, should receive to the Communion any such Persons which are not of his own Church or Parish, or shall baptize any of their Children, he is to be Suspended. Now if our Law suffers Persons to be Excommunicated for going to hear and communicate with other Neighbour Ministers, when their own Ministers are not Preachers; and suffers those Neighbour Ministers to be Suspended for admitting them, I cannot see, I must confess, how it leaves room for Ministerial Instruction and Pastoral Help, if their own publick Ministers are unqualify'd. And a late Prosecution of one that never went to Meetings, because he did not go to his own Parish Church, is an evidence, that whatever may be pretended since the *Act of Toleration*, none can safely depend upon freedom from Molestation, that take the Remedy Mr. Hoadly proposes. If their Ministers are unqualify'd, they are liable to be Prosecuted, for leaving their own Church, and going to Worship in Neighbouring Parishes. And therefore tho' the Gentleman in hast tells me, *That I knew I could not prove what was asserted,* (which is but an odd fancy, unless he could see my inside) I hope upon second Thoughts he'll at least own, that 'tis possible I might seem to

my self to discern some grounds for what was advanc'd: And I'll add, that he'll do his Church some service, if he can prove me in this Point Mistaken, which would be so far from grieving, that I profess it would rejoice me. He adds farther.

Fifthly, *That supposing an unqualify'd Minister settled in a Parish, His Parishioners are not presently in so desperate a Condition as we represent them to be in:* Their Condition would be bad enough I think verily, if they were so oblig'd to Acquiesce in such an unqualify'd Minister, that they might not have Liberty to resort to another: Too bad to allow of any Plea I should think from such as are sensible, for what Ends the Ministry was Appointed in the Church; and how those Ends are frustated, if when a Parish Minister is remarkably defective either in his Intellectuals or Morals, a Man might not put himself under the Pastoral Conduct of another. Tho' the People are not indeed oblig'd to give up themselves blindly to his Direction, yet they may need better Direction than he could give them: Though they would not need to receive whatever he preach'd or taught with an implicit faith; yet better teaching may be necessary for their instruction; and a better Life necessary to prevent danger of their being ensnar'd by that Example of their Minister. They may have a Liturgy 'tis true let the Parish Minister be what he will: But that having that read among them, will answer all the necessary ends of a Gospel Ministry, is not so evident as to gain every Mans Assent at the first mentioning it. Though we cannot say that this constant appointed service is defective in any thing necessary to salvation, or that there is any thing in it destructive of it, yet if God have appointed a Ministry for higher ends in his Church, than the reading this service, I can't see what should hinder the People from look-

p. 159.

ing out for Ministers that will answer those higher ends, if those that are fix'd by Law amongst them are incapable of them. To have such a service, as ours, is its granted is a *great and unspeakable Happiness*, if we compare our'selves with those Countries where the Pubick Prayers are in an unknown Tongue: And compratively so consider'd, we are far from *teaching our People to think lightly of it*: And yet to have such Ministers that can only read this service, and are not able either to instruct the ignorant, or Direct the Conscience, or Comfort the Drooping, or answer the other important ends of the Ministry; and be contended with them, when we may have better; is so far from being an Happiness, that it is a weakness few would be guilty of in a temporal Concernment; nor would it be reckon'd the Wisdom of any Men to plead for it. 'Tis said, *they may Constantly attend upon this service* (though they can have no more,) *without endangering their salvation, if they be truly serious themselves*: And if they may why *should they not*? A Pleasant Argument I confess! So a Man may say, suppose People are under a Government that will allow them no Ministers at all, they may continue without them, without endangering their Salvation, if they be truly serious themselves: And if they may, why should they *not*? Is not this Argument as good as the other? For, will not their own Seriousness secure their Salvation without any Ministers, as well as under insufficient Ministers? And so it may be concluded upon as good grounds, that they in one case should have no Ministers, as in the other, that they should have as good as none. For as for the *private Helps and Assistances* mention'd, they might have been in one case as well as another. Let Mr. Hoadly palliate the matter as he pleases, I must confess to me hardly any
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thing is more unaccountable, than to have Divines plead for Persons satisfying themselves under such Preachers of the Gospel, as either substantially pervert and deprave it, or whose profligate Lives proclaim them opposers and enemies to the holy Rules and Design of it. But he goes on: *If they will leave the publick Ministrations of their own Parish Minister because they think him unqualify'd, still here is no necessity for a Separation.* I answer; There may be a necessity of a Separation for other reasons that are insisted on under the other Heads. *Tho' there may be Ministers of the establish'd Church, within some convenient distance from them, qualify'd to preach to them; yet it is possible also in some cases, there may not: And if there be, I can't perceive that the Canons of 1603. do at all allow Persons to put themselves under their Pastoral Care. I must own indeed, what Mr. Hoadly refers to me for, is my real sense, viz. That if they go to another Parish* p. 161. *the Inconvenience is not great; nor would it be so, if all Men had their full liberty left them. But the Church in her Canons appears of another mind, and makes little distinction, as I can discern, between communicating statedly with other Parish Churches, and with separate Churches. And therefore I can't see how his arguing upon this Head can have any force.*

Well then, to sum up the matter; If Persons are not oblig'd to part with their Right of choosing their own Pastors, in compliance with the Demands of any either in the *establish'd way*, or in a *separate way*; if the Inconveniencies and Mischiefs attending the enjoyment of this Right are inferiour to those that would arise from the relinquishing it; if many are discourag'd from falling in with the Establishment, as not being able to bear to have a Pastor impos'd upon them; if every
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Man may be left to sit under the Pastor whom he himself would choose, without damage to the publick; if Mr. *Baxter* did not (as is insinuated) attempt to deprive the People of that Right in this case, and they may safely assert their Right whenever it is invaded to the detriment of their real Edification; if when an insufficient and unqualify'd Parish Minister is impos'd upon them, they are not by the Constitution left at liberty to provide one for themselves in whom they may be satisfy'd, in the establish'd Church, any more than out of it; then is Mr. *Hoadly's* attempt upon this Head fruitless: And *the Argument may do as much towards the Justification of the Practice of the Dissenters*, as it was pretended it would when it was produced; and as far as the Constitution unduly imposes upon them, *it may be alledg'd in their Vindication.*

p. 164. It being mention'd as a farther Objection in this case, That the Method of the establish'd Church broke in upon Oeconomical Government, Mr. *Hoadly* turns it off lightly, tho' in reality it has no small difficulty. He answers the Queries by a few Observations, which (he says) *we will not deny to be true.* But they are consider'd before, and I am not for repetitions: Instead of them, I shall close the Head with some Remarks upon his additional Questions.

p. 165. I grant it an unspeakable Happiness, that we live in a Christian and Protestant Country, where the Bible lies open to all, and where there are as excellent and useful Books for the Edification of the People as can be; and yet I think a lively serious Ministry a vast advantage, earnestly to be desir'd, and carefully to be secur'd, whatever hazard is run in other respects. I grant the publick Service appointed with all its Defects and Disorders, to be vastly preferable to the *Latin Service* in Popish Countries;

Countries; and yet I'm far from thinking the reading this Service a sufficient discharge of the Ministerial Function. I own it a great Mercy, that in the establish'd Church there are *so many able Teachers, to whom the People may, upon all occasions, resort*: And yet I can't think their Ability necessarily obliges all that live in the Parishes of which they are Incumbents, to acquiesce in them as their Pastors, if they have others at hand, whose Gifts appear to them (according to the best Judgment they can pass) more suitable to their Capacities and Circumstances: Nor can I see upon what rational grounds they could acquiesce in those Persons as their Pastors, (were they ever so deserving) that have ty'd their own Hands, and are under such Restraints that they cannot, or so disinclin'd that they will not, dispense the Ordinances of Christ in such a way as wherein with satisfaction to their Consciences they may enjoy them. And suppose I should own, that with our abundant Helps *the Salvation of the People would not necessarily be hazarded by their attendance upon the publick Worship, (in the establish'd Church) because their own Parish Minister is not qualify'd to instruct them*; I think yet they would discover little value for their Souls, and little concern for their Improvement, if they did not carefully secure to themselves the most advantagious Assistances which the Providence of God gave them an opportunity of enjoying.

For my part, I think *the Souls of the People as much in danger from an unqualify'd Minister, as the Health of their Bodies from a bad Physician*: And tho' Mr. Hoadly, in the Physician's case, has added this Passage, *whom they are entirely to trust*, yet I can't see what obligation any Man is under to *trust* his Physician any farther than he is satisfy'd of his Ability and Integrity; and so far,
I hope,

I hope, he may trust his Minister too, in things of which he himself may not be so capable to pass a Judgment. Far be it from me to think, that the People might not *find out qualify'd Guides in all the whole Establishment*; but I'm sure many can't find them in their own Parishes: And if they did, when they pretend to a Right not only to the Parish Maintenance, (which out of regard to publick Order, our People are free to give them) but to take the charge of their Souls, without asking their consent, this looks like an Encroachment, where the People have a Right to Liberty; and naturally tends to abate that Respect, which the valuable Abilities of such Ministers would otherwise command. In matters of this nature, as I love to be left to the freedom of my own Sentiments, so I can yield that all others enjoy the like freedom: But for my part, I must needs say, were there such an *Establishment* as Mr. Hoadly mentions, in which there were *provided and settled able Physicians, and good Tutors, proper Trades, wholesome Diet, and sufficient Clothing for my Children*, I should be far from thinking it my Duty to recede from my Right to have the management of them my self; nor should I *rest satisfy'd*, if I saw any reason to apprehend I could do better for them: And I fancy I shall have most sensible Parents concurring with me. But then as to the other case he puts with reference to our Children, if he'll distinguish between Children in their Minority, and when they are grown up to Years of Discretion, I think the Difficulty vanishes.

For tho' if my Children, while Minors, should, when *I require them to worship God with me, beg my excuse*, I should refuse it, and use my Authority over them; this being a matter which God hath subjected to the Parental Authority during

ring Minority ; yet if when grown up to Years of Understanding, they should *claim a Right to look after themselves*, I must confess I could not gain-say it. I should indeed think it my Duty to argue with them, and to endeavour by Reason and Scripture to convince their Judgments, if I really thought them guilty of Irregularity as to the Worship of God : But if this would not do, I could not see how I could be justify'd in any other Method. This, Mr. Hoadly says, *would fill our Families with such Quarrels, and such Hatreds, as he is sure we would not know how to bear*. But this depends upon the Tempers of those concern'd ; and I have known it in Fact otherwise more than once. I have known Families where the Husband has follow'd one Pastor, the Wife another, and the Children that were grown up several others, according to their different Inclinations ; and yet they have liv'd very lovingly together, without any of those *Quarrels and Hatreds* Mr. Hoadly mentions.

But supposing this should occasion any Heats, he has not put us in a way to prevent them. Must the Master of the Family carry it by Authority over all under his Roof? Possibly that may be yielded if he goes to his Parish Church. But must it be so too, suppose he goes to a Dissenting Meeting? This is a case that should be sup-
 posed as well as the other ; and the Inconvenience that may that way arise, should have a Remedy ; which I cannot see that he has provided, any more than I can, that the *Questions propos'd upon this Head* are answer'd, tho' he says they are. p. 167.

Upon the whole then, *Peace and Order* are not sufficient reasons for Persons entire parting with their Right to choose their own Pastors ; for they may be maintain'd as far as is necessary with the retaining

retaining of that Right : And it is highly unreasonable to urge Men to part with this Right to put themselves under unqualify'd spiritual Guides, which yet is necessary in some cases according to the present Constitution under the Establishment. And tho' there may be some cases which this Plea will not suit ; yet where it does suit, it is good and strong. And if Mr. *Hoadly* will consult the learned * *Blondel*, perhaps he'll find that there is more to be said in proof of the divine Original, and unalienableness of this Right ; and also for its exercise for many Ages in the Church, than he imagin'd when he made so light of it. He is very large upon this Head. And our Famous *Master Fox*, speaking of the Time of 830 Years after Christ, thus expresses himself : *Likewise Vowsons and Pluralities of Benefices, were things then as much unknown as now they are pernicious to the Church, taking away all true Elections from the Flock of Christ.*

* *Apolog.*
pro sent.
Hier. de
Episc. &
Presb.
Sect. 3.
p. 379.
&c.

Act. &
Monum.
Print.
1576.

p. 5.

p. 168.

Another Argument, pleaded by the People in defence of their Nonconformity, is taken from the want of Discipline in the Church. But in this Mr. *H.* can see no Consequence, while others think it is very strong. His Suggestions are these. He says, *A Separation cannot possibly contribute to Discipline.* I answer ; It may contribute to it among those that separate ; and it may necessitate those also from whom they separate to give way to it, if ever they would effect a Coalition. But then he adds, *That a Separation is not allowable, supposing it could effectually promote this Discipline.* This would easily be granted, were Separation in it self simply consider'd a real Evil : But if a Separation with a charitable Spirit, in order to a nearer approach to the Rule of Scripture, be so far from being a real Evil, as to be in it self not only justifiable, but highly commendable,
 (which

(which he must allow our People to believe, till it is better disprov'd) then is his Position upon just Grounds Deny'd.

He farther pleads, that though the Discipline desir'd in the Church be not to be found, yet *we may Live in the Communion of it, without bazar-ding our own Salvation, or being desil'd by the Wickedness of the Profane.* Be it granted him ; yet still every Christian being oblig'd to take care, that he live in the Use of all Gods Ordinances and Commandments, it follows that where all Christs Institutions (of which Discipline is one) are not to be had, Christians may peaceably withdraw, and seek them where they can find them. But then he says, *in the Churches set up in Opposition, there will certainly be Men of as bad Principles as bad designs, carrying forward their own Private ends under the Cloak of separation, and the colour of greater Purity then they will allow their neighbours.* I answer, we are far from pretending our Churches are without mixture, we know very well, that there are no such Churches to be expected here on Earth : And yet we think we may without Vanity pretend, to be more careful as to Conformity to the Rule of Scripture in this respect than the Establish'd Church. Though we pretend not that *our Amendments would make the Church so perfect in its Discipline, that there should be none seen in it but Pious and Devout Persons :* No Sir, we are not such *Visionaries :* yet we think the too Visible Profanation of the most sacred Institution of our Religion, In the *Church of England,* might easily be prevented, would the Constitution allow it. Tho' we can't undertake that any Settlement could be so happy, as that there should be none in the Visible Communion of the Church, but *such as have renounc'd a fleshly and sensual, a worldly and profane Life ;* yet we think our People have very

very good reason to be averſe from acquieſcing in ſuch a Conſtitution, as will force Perſons to Communicate who don't credibly profeſs to renounce a wicked Life; or whoſe Profeſſion is notoriously contradicted by an openly ſcandalous Converſation. Tho' we are far from thinking the Church can ever be ſo perfect, as that none that deſerve Cenſure ſhould be ſcreened, and none that deſerve Encouragement ſhould be cenſur'd; yet we know and are well aſſured, (and have many of our Brethren owning as much) that the *Cenſures of the Church*, both might and ought to be manag'd more agreeably to Scripture; and cannot ſee what it ſignifies to be continually *wiſhing* what is not endeavour'd to be effected. When Mr. Hoadly moves for our *undertaking* in this caſe, he ſeems not ſo ſenſible of the needfulneſs of another ſort of Diſcipline, in conformity to the Rule of Scripture, as it were to be wiſh'd. As for *undertaking* for our People that they ſhould be *perſuaded* that our *Amendments* would make the Church perfect, that they mayn't lie under the ſame neceſſity of ſeparating ſtill: This, to uſe the Gentleman's own Phraſe, is rather Banter than Argument; it is a needleſs Propoſal; unleſs our People thought Perfection really here attainable; which is what we that know them beſt cannot diſcover: But with his good leave we muſt declare againſt any ſuch Conſtitution as ſhould oblige us to *undertake* either for our ſelves or our People, that we'll be ſo ty'd down, as that we may not upon conviction alter the Methods commonly uſed, if it be neceſſary in order to a greater conformity to Scripture. But then he adds, *We do ill to produce that as a conſiderable Plea for our People, which we would not think ſufficient to keep our ſelves from conforming to the Church of England, and thus to perpetuate the cauſe of Diſiſion.*

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But is here any thing of an Argument! Suppose we did alledge that for our People, which we really find them often plead, tho' it would not keep us from conforming, if in their place; is this so absurd? Is there any necessity that their Consciences and ours must be exactly of the same dimensions? Mayn't they be afraid of sinning, and thereupon in Conscience forbear, in things that we may yet think we may lawfully comply with? And mayn't we in such a case produce their Plea without approving it? I'm at a loss for the Inconsistency! However, 'tis not thus in this matter. For we lay equal stress with them on the want of Discipline in the Church; neither can I discern any foundation for so much as a surmise of the contrary. And therefore his charging us with *perpetuating the Cause of Division*, is a groundless Censure; and a transferring upon us the guilt of his own Church, in which, after so many Complaints, nothing hath been done in a way of redress.

But he goes on, and says, *That Separation (on this account) is no greater a demonstration of the dislike of the People, than what they might give, and still remain Conformists.* Which I deny; since to manifest dislike in such a way as to do what lies on them in their several places towards the redressing what is complain'd of, carries the point much farther, than to signify their dislike, and yet sit still contentedly with their Hands bound, only sending up once a Year an insignificant *Wish*. If this *Separation* however cannot be without *sad and unchristian Consequences*, the more are they to blame, who, after so many Complaints, could not be prevail'd on to make any advance towards that *Discipline* in the Church, that might have prevented these *Consequences*; which is the more inexcusable, when

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they

they have profess'd all along themselves, to be earnestly *Wishing*, what they could not be prevail'd with, to do any thing to effect. And if, after all, such a Separation cannot promote this *Reformation*, it must be because these Gentlemen won't contribute to the answering their own *Wishes*, of the Reasonableness of which Procedure of theirs it is left to the World to judge.

I having suggested, That the old Puritans groan'd under the want of *Discipline*, and yet were against a Separation, as long as there was any hope of *Amendment*; he queries, Whether they have left any thing behind them, from which we can fairly collect it to have been their opinion, that tho' a Separation was unlawful in their Days, yet it would be lawful and necessary in our Times, if an *Amendment* were not made? And he gives this reason for his demand: Because (he says) if they have, they are very much misrepresented, or notoriously inconsistent with themselves; and if they have not, they are wholly forsaken by us, who pretend to tread in their Steps, and yet oppose some of their main Principles. I answer; Mr. Hoadly would not need to be perfectly read in their Writings, to be able to observe, that in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, they look'd upon the Church as a Reforming Church, that confess'd the Work of Reformation yet unfinish'd; and therefore they declar'd they were for adhering to the publick Ordinances in the Church, till a better season should offer for a farther advance. In the *Admonition*, and other Writings of that Reign, they presented their Grievances, which they apprehended requir'd a Redress, to the Consideration of Church and State: And tho' they met with many Discouragements, they yet liv'd in hope, that the Government would at length compleat the Reformation.

This he may see plainly if he'll but peruse a little Book, call'd, *The Plea of the Innocent*. A Book written with that Seriousness and Temper, that I can hardly apprehend he will reckon the time mispent that would be taken up in perusing it. Neither can any one that reads that, which was call'd *The Millenary Petition* (which hemay find in *Fuller's Church History*) presented to K. James soon after his accession to the Throne of *England*, think any farther Evidence needful, that they had still the same hopes.

Written
by Mr.
Jos. Ni-
chols, and
Printed
in 8vo.
1602.

After the *Canons* were settled in 1603, and rigorously put in Execution in the Years following, they at length earnestly Petition'd for a *Toleration*; begging they might have liberty allow'd them to worship God without Impositions; and Reform their own Churches according to the Rule of Scripture: But it was refus'd them. And yet still they waited, in hopes that their Pleas would at last be consider'd, and their Reasons comply'd with. He, in the mean time, that carefully observes their Writings against the *Brownists*, will find, that they were mainly against their *Separation* upon two accounts.

See an humble Supplication for Toleration, and liberty to enjoy and observe the Ordinances of Christ Jesus, in lieu of humane Constitutions. Printed in 4to. 1609.

First; Because they not only withdrew from a true Church, that retain'd all Essentials; but separated from it as *Antichristian* and *Idolatrous*. And therefore the great thing they undertook to prove against them was this, That whatever Complaints the Nonconformists in those Days made of the Corruptions in the Government of the Church, in its Ministry, Worship and Prayers, in the Administration of the Sacraments, and in People admitted or received as external Members; they yet did not infer a Necessity or

See Ball
against
Can.
p. 1; 2:

Lawfulness of separating from the Parish Churches in *England* as no true Churches of Christ; nor the publick Ministry; as False and Antichristian; nor the Worship of the Church of *England*, as Idolatry. Such a total Separation as that of the *Brownists* from a true Church, a total Separation from it as Antichristian, and from its Worship as Idolatrous, they freely inveigh'd against, as *Donatistical*, and utterly destructive of Peace and Charity. * And,

* In Mr. Rathband's

Preface to that grave Confutation of the *Brownists*, which is said to have been drawn up by sundry Ministers; He declares, that the Persons they oppos'd, when they were arguing against Separation, were such as *no sooner distaste their old burden of superstitious Conformity; but withal, they dislike all set Forms of Prayer, especially in the Liturgy, as unlawful; question their own standing in the Ministry as Antichristian, and abstain from publick Worship; especially the Sacraments, as Idolatrous, &c.*

Secondly, Had their Separation been charitably manag'd, (as it was not) they yet declare themselves the more against it, as it tended to defeat their hopes of a farther Reformation in the Church, which they were still expecting. And tho' it must at the same time be own'd, that there are in some of their Writings, several Passages that seem to make against the lawfulness of a Separation from a true Church, upon any account whatsoever, yet that such general Positions must be understood with a limitation, is plain from other Passages, in which they distinguish an *unwarrantable Separation* from one that is *warrantable*. For to make a voluntary Separation from a true Church *unwarrantable*, they say it must have a wrong ground, or be manag'd in a wrong manner. A voluntary Separation from a true Church, in which there is *no just ground for dislike or distaste*, they declare *unwarrantable*; and well they might. This is Schism with a witness. Again, a voluntary Separation from

from a true Church that is *rashly* manag'd they declare *unwarrantable*. And they add, that there are two cases in which it may be said to be *rashly* manag'd. 1. *Where a ground or cause is pretended that is but light.* 2. *Tho' the ground of the Separation be just, yet if it be sudden and heady, without due endeavour and expectation of Reformation in that Church, it may be a rash, and consequently an unwarrantable Separation, inasmuch as it is opposite to Charity.* As for their

Brinsley's Arraignment of the present Schism, p. 24, 25, 27.

The same is to be found in *Jenkyns's Sermon, publish'd in Separation Self-condemn'd, p. 23, 29 &c.*

Separation from Rome, they declare it far from being *unwarrantable* upon any of these grounds. It was neither *unjust* nor *rash*. Not *unjust*; because warranted by the authority of Scripture: Nor *rash*; there having all the means been used for her Reformation and Cure, that possibly could be thought of; but all to no purpose: So as after this, what remains but a positive Secession and Separation? This being their common sense, I think I may reasonably infer three things.

1. That their Principles would at length have led them to the worshipping of God in separate Assemblies, whenever the Magistrate would have given allowance, and they saw no hope of a farther Reformation; but rather a farther fixing on the old Bottom. A total Separation indeed from the Church of *England*, (which they universally own'd to be a true Church) as Antichristian, they could never have been for: But a charitable Separation they must have been for. When they had found, that tho' all the means had been used for the Reformation and Cure of the Church of *England*, that possibly could be thought of, it was all to no purpose, they would but have acted in pursuit of their own general Principles, in crying, *what*

remains but a positive Secession and Separation? Especially if there was the allowance of the Magistrate, which they laid a great stress upon.

2. I infer also, That how much soever they may have been misrepresented, yet they are not, as Mr. Hoadly intimates, *notoriously inconsistent with themselves*: For tho' they condemn'd the *Brownists* for separating from the Church of England as Antichristian, yet it does not follow but they themselves might in time have seen reason charitably to separate from the same Church in order to a greater conformity to the Rule of Scripture: Tho' they blam'd them for separating unreasonably and rashly, to the defeating the hopes given of a farther Reformation: yet it does not follow, but they might unblameably themselves so far separate from the Church, (as ordinarily to worship God in distinct Assemblies, now and then in the mean time joining with them to shew their Charity) whenever the time should come, that they could find they might upon good grounds say, That tho' all the means had been used for the Reformation and Cure of the Church that could be thought of, yet all was to no purpose. For any *notorious Inconsistency* herein, I confess I am utterly to seek: Nay, so naturally did their Principles lead that way, that, as was observed by the Ministers of *Old England*, in their Letter to their Brethren in *New England*, (written in 1637) it was often objected, that *Nonconformists in Practice, were Separatists in Heart, but that they went cross to their own Positions, viz. in not separating*. Now they must be very odd Men indeed, if they were at once liable to the Charge of *Inconsistency*, in separating, and in not separating. Again,

3. I farther infer, That the old Puritans are not *wholly forsaken by us, who pretend to tread in their Steps.* We don't indeed let our Reverence towards them, or any Body of Men, rise so high, as to take a thing for true because they said it; or for good because they did it: And yet we are so far from opposing, that we embrace their *main Principles*, as thinking them solid, and able to bear the Test. With them we own the Church of *England* a true Church; and from such a Church we dare not separate as Antichristian; nor could we think our Separation from such a Church justifiable, had not all means that could possibly be thought of been first try'd for its Reformation and Cure; and that to no purpose: But when the Assertors of the necessity of a farther Reformation, have been so long waiting, and used so many Entreaties, and all to no purpose; when after all, instead of any remaining hopes of an Advance, there has appear'd rather a Retrospection, and an inclination absolutely to fix on the old Settlement, without any Amendments, in this case, crying out, *what remains but a positive Seccession and Separation?* We think we act no otherwise than they would have done in our case. In which we are the more confirm'd, in finding that such Men as old Mr. *Simeon Ash*, and Mr. *Antony Burgess*, and others, who were entirely of the Puritan Stamp, took this course, upon this view, at the *Bartholomew Ejection*, without departing at all from their former Principles.

He that
desires
farther
Proof

that our Principles are the same with those of the old Nonconformists, may consult *Troughron's Apology*, p. 83. &c And Dr. *Rule's Rational Defence of Nonconformity*, in Answer to Dr. *Stillingfleet*, p. 36. &c.

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But Mr. *Hoadly* farther queries, *where this regular Discipline is to be found, for the sake of which Peace and Unity have been disregarded?* I answer; We have neither *disregarded Peace nor Unity*, but have discover'd a readiness for both upon, the Terms of Scripture: But that in our separate Assemblies we have, in our apprehension, a more *regular Discipline*, than is to be found in the Parish Churches, has before been intimated under the third Argument; to which I must refer him for an Answer of his remaining Queries, which have been before consider'd. Only whereas he enquires, *Where is this Power allow'd by the People to the Pastors, which under this Head is claim'd to the Pastors?* I shall add, That whether the Pastor acts alone in admitting Members, and in Church Censures, or in conjunction with some chosen from among the People, in order to their greater satisfaction, (in which some of our separate Congregations use one way, and others the other) it makes no great difference, provided the Scripture Rule be kept to, that none are admitted but such as make a credible profession of Christianity, and none such refus'd; and that upon scandalous Faults, they fall under suitable Censures: As to which (in the midst of all our Imperfections) I am satisfy'd, there is more care taken in many of our Congregations, than the Constitution of the Church leaves room for.

The next Argument propos'd was taken from the *Godfathers and Godmothers*, which Parents were in the Church requir'd to provide for their Children, which many of the People could not see how they could be oblig'd to, when the Circumstances of the case did not require it. But Mr. *Hoadly* is not for considering this distinctly, but joins with it the two next Arguments, drawn

from

from the *sign of the Cross*, and from *Kneeling at the Communion*; which are Additional appendages to Christs institutions, and as Ordered by the Church, upon pain of being depriv'd of the Ordinances are utterly unwarrantable.

But he says, I might have added *joining with Forms of Prayer, and several other Scruples which generally go together.* In which Motion he Mistakes my Aim; which was not to heap up all that had been Objected against the Worship and Discipline of the *Church of England*, by those that were dissatisfy'd with it; but to give a short Account of The Arguments, that generally sway'd them, of which I am far from reckoning that, which has by some been drawn from the unlawfulness of *Forms*, to be one, And why he should suppose, that the Persons who were against *Gossips* and the *Cross in Baptism*, and *Kneeling at the Communion*, were generally Scrupulous of joining in a *Form of Prayer*, I know no Reason. But with his Leave, I must declare, I *advanc'd* these Arguments in the name even of those whom I call the *Moderate Non Conformists*. We have his Affirmation indeed to prove, that we have *acknowledg'd the Lawfulness of these things in themselves, and advised our People on some Occasions to submit to them*: And yet the thing is not so evident as not to admit of debate. For though it will be allow'd as to *Kneeling at the Communion*; yet that any Moderate Non Conformists, have acknowledg'd the Lawfulness of *Covenanting Sponsors* (in the sense explain'd when I had that Head under Consideration) and the *Cross* as a Dedicating sign in Baptism, I must declare is more than I know. And If any particular Persons have done so, I'm satisfy'd, upon search they'd be found pretty peculiar in their sentiments.

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When

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When then he claims it of us as a Piece of Common Justice to the Establish'd Church, that we be always ready and free to assure our People, that it is our Opinion that these things may Lawfully be comply'd with, he strains the Point too high by far. Many of us I am sure cannot do it with a safe Conscience: And how then should our doing it be a Piece of Justice? If this be the only way to prevent violent Prejudices and Heats, we are very unhappy. We are indeed willing, so we enjoy but our own Liberty, to leave our Brethren to theirs, without Censuring them. So we have but our own Children Baptiz'd without *Covenanting sponsors*, or having the *Cross* made on them as a Dedicating sign; we won't condemn those, who are not satisfy'd in having their Children Baptiz'd without both *Cross* and *Godfathers*: But to perswade us to tell our People that they may Lawfully have both, when we can't find that any of their Warmest Advocates have hither to been able to justify either, is a greater Jest than I expected from Mr. *Hoadly* in a matter so serious.

However that I may do the Gentleman justice one way, though I can't see any room for it in the way he desires, I must own he yields these Arguments to be strong, where the Lawfulness of the things requir'd is Question'd. As for those who can * be perswaded by no Arguments, that the Baptizing their Children with *Covenanting sponsors*, and the Dedicating sign of the *Cross* is Lawful, he declares it his Opinion, that while they are thus perswaded it is as much their duty to separate from the Church of England as it is the duty of that Church, to separate from the Church of Rome, I thank him for this Concession, though I think he has therein but done us Justice: And can assure him, that as far as I can judge, there are

* I here take the Liberty to turn his will into Can, as thinking it a fairer word in a Case of this nature.

are few among us, but will have benefit by it. And having made us so frank a Concession, we will carefully weigh his Admonitions.

We will own our selves accountable to God for the Errors of our Judgments, as well as for the Vices of our Practice; but can't think it our Error to be rather for following his Word as our Directory, than any humanly devised Rituals: We will own our selves especially responsible for such Errors, as carry along with them sad and pernicious Consequences, and tend to disturb Society, and destroy Christian Charity: And therefore at the same time as we endeavour to keep as close to our Rule as may be our selves, we will make our Brethren, from whom we differ, considerable allowance, for Education, and Custom, and other things, which so often influence Men in their choice even in matters of Religion, and endeavour to carry it towards them with that affectionate Respect, as may manifest, that if we really are in an Error, (without discerning it) we yet neither disturb Society, nor destroy Christian Charity. In the affair of divine Worship, we will pay more Deference to the holy Scriptures, which we know cannot deceive us, than to the Practice of the Church, which we know may; and more regard what God himself says, than what is said by Men of one Denomination or another, how great a value soever we may have for them: And this we take to be the most likely way, to avoid having our Eyes blinded by Prejudice, or Passion, or Hatred, or any worldly Design; or bindred from seeing the Truth. or attending to it, or embracing it. We dare not desire to sacrifice the common Peace to our Humours or Fancies: Tho' we are afraid our Brethren have been herein too tardy, yet we would not imitate them: And we look upon it as much to be lamented, that there is any tendency

dency that way to be found among any of us. We are ready to listen to their Arguments, and to yield to them if they appear convincing; provided we are but allow'd to lay greater stress upon higher things that are more weighty. We mayn't indeed perhaps look upon the Honour of our Master, or the Peace of the Society we belong to, to depend so much upon our being all of one Mind in those things about which they and we differ in our Apprehensions, as our Brethren may do; and therefore mayn't look upon our selves as so strongly oblig'd to seek for Conviction, or wish for Satisfaction, about a few Ceremonies, that han't the least footing in the Word of God, as it may to them seem desirable we should: But still, as far as we know our selves, we are willing and desirous to know the Mind of Christ, and comply with it. We are not for acquiescing in the Principles in which we have been educated, any farther than they are bottom'd upon Scripture: Let our Brethren prove they have no foundation there, and we shall think our selves oblig'd to reject them: But till then, we hope they'll allow us to retain them.

If the Effects and Consequences of Separation are dismal and horrible, we think they that will force us into a Separation, by obliging us to Baptize our Children with Covenanting Sureties, and the Dedicating Sign of the Cross, which we apprehend unlawful, are the more to blame. And if the Effects of Unity and Conformity would be blessed and glorious, then are they the more inexcusable, who will still retain such Impositions, as tend to perpetuate Division. We are however dispos'd to alter, when Reasons are offer'd; provided they are bottom'd on the Word of God, and are such as will bear scanning; or otherwise we think our Brethren unreasonable to desire it.

We agree, That we are bound to incline to Unity rather than to Division; and therefore will be careful to maintain an Unity of Affection, even when they divide themselves from us, by those Particulars that are the Marks of Distinction between them and us. We are also for Conformity rather than Separation; and yet will rather let them force us into a Separation, than we'll conform to Impositions which we know they have no Right to impose, which we question whether we may lawfully use, but which we are assur'd; and they themselves cannot deny, they may lawfully set aside. We are not averse to Conviction; or afraid of what may induce us to alter our Minds; for we know we are all fallible Creatures: And yet we think we have so many more weighty things to employ us, that it would be altogether unaccountable should we let our Conversation continually run in a Controversal strain; or should we lay more stress on those few little things wherein we differ, than on the many more and much greater things wherein we agree. We are free to own, *That a Man may then most properly be said to be in the way of his Duty, when he is perfectly ready, and dispos'd, to attend to whatever can be offer'd him that respects any material Point of Practice:* And yet we would not willingly incur the unhappy Character of some, who are ever learning, but never come to the knowledge of the truth.

And from hence it appears, that the two things added upon this Head, don't answer the Arguments produc'd. For supposing it true, *That those People, who scruple the Terms of Communion here mention'd, do scruple also, generally speaking, many other things in Conformity, not mention'd:* It does not therefore follow but that holding these things mention'd unlawful, their Nonconformity

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is justifiable. And suppose I could not name any who would Conform, were these Terms alter'd, unless at the same time Episcopacy and Liturgies were thrown off too; yet I can't see how it would therefore follow, that there were none such. But seeing the Gentleman puts it upon that issue, I desire him to remember, that the Commissioners at the Savoy, neither desir'd that Episcopacy or Liturgies might be quite thrown off; but offer'd to have conform'd, provided Episcopacy were reduc'd to its primitive Bounds, according to Bishop Usher's Model; the Liturgy reform'd, according to the Rule of Scripture; the Orders of those who had been admitted into the Ministry by Presbyters, secured; and the disputed Ceremonies left in their proper indifference, to be used or omitted at pleasure: And had they herein been comply'd with, the number of Nonconformists had been comparatively very few. But when he says, *God forbid that their Conformity should be purchas'd at so dear a rate!* I must needs say, his Zeal appears to me to exceed his Charity. For, supposing the Mischiefs of meer Nonconformity to be such as he oft represents them; and the Effects of meer Conformity so blessed and glorious as he seems to account them; I should think, in order to bring Persons to Conformity, a truly charitable Person, might freely part not only with Episcopacy and Liturgies, as far as they are contested, but with all the Ceremonies, and in general, with whatever is not of divine Institution.

Rom. 14. I am apt to think, he that said, *It is good neither to eat Flesh, nor to drink Wine, nor any thing*
 21. *whereby thy Brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is*
 1 Cor. 8. *made weak*, would have rather said, *God forbid I should reckon the parting with Prelatical Episcopacy, and a defective and disorderly*
 13. *Liturgy*

Liturgy, or any other things that are not necessary, too dear a rate at which to purchase the *Peace of the Church*, and bring those Divisions to an end, which have so much weaken'd and endanger'd it.

As for his *other thing* mention'd, he is under a Mistake. For the Moderate Nonconformists looking upon the Sponsors entring Children into the Christian Covenant, when they are to be admitted upon the Right of their Parents, and the Dedicating Sign of the Cross, as Additions to Christ's Institution, cannot therefore but esteem them *unlawful*; and consequently they cannot acknowledge that the Separation of those who separate because these things are unlawful, is founded upon a Mistake, and a false Judgment. Nor can they acknowledge that the establish'd Church is rather unhappy, than blame-worthy; because it requires of the People things they cannot lawfully submit to; while they are persuaded they are unwarrantable Additions to Christ's Institution. And tho' 'tis very true, we cannot our selves contrive any Constitution, but that there will be some weak Persons offended at something in it; yet we can avoid being fond of any Constitution, that should force things upon them at which they are offended. We are against all Terms of Communion that Christ has not fix'd to our hands; and were that the Standard, they that should judge it *unlawful to Conform*, would oppose him rather than us. And if they will be forming and encreasing Parties, to him they must answer for it: If they will set up other Churches in opposition, there is a Day of Reckoning not far off: And our leaving them to that, without any other opposition, than rational and scriptural Conviction amounts to, will, in our judgment, more contribute to the present Peace of

of the Church, than any constraint or force we could pretend to make use of.

Finally: What Mr. *Baxter* observes of some in the *Times of Confusion*, as to their being highly blameable, for *thinking that whatever needed Amendment, requir'd their obstinate Separation, &c.* may still remain true of some to this day; and yet the Separation of those who think it unlawful to comply with such Additions to Christ's Institution as the Scripture does not warrant, may be justifiable before God, or in other words, be built upon a good foundation. And it being left to us to be Judges, we must declare, we esteem it both reasonable and becoming, for us to court an Union, both with those that run farther from the Church than we do, and with the *Establisht Church too*. We will court both the one and the other to Union so far, as to declare our readiness to Embrace them as Brethren, and join with them Occasionally in all Ordinances as an Evidence of our Charitable Respect for them, provided they'll require Nothing of us that we judge unlawful: But we dare not so Court either of them, as in order to a Pretended Union with them, to approve of impositions or comply with such things as we judge unlawful.

The last Plea for those that respected and adher'd to the Ejected Ministers, was taken from the Remarks they made upon the *Spirit of the Church*, which has signaliz'd it self, in a most Eminent manner. But as for what was suggested under this Head, Mr. *Hoadly* says 'tis nothing but *Invective*. And he Queries whether this is an Argument fit to be urg'd in Defence of a Separation or not? As if an Argument from the Spirit of the Roman Church were so ridiculous! But for my Part I'm not asham'd to own that I take what was offered about the Spirit of the *Church of England* for a very good Confirmation of the Dissenters

Acting

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Acting on the Grounds before propos'd. For when they that had the Ascendant, would require all to comply with their Humours and Fancies; to conform to such Impositions as were not warranted by Scripture; to comply with some things as they judg'd unlawful, or else they must be cast out of the Church: When such a Constitution as ours is must be settled, in opposition to all the Persuasions, Arguments, and Entreaties, used by the Managers of the *Savoy Conference*; when such irregular Methods were used to settle this Constitution; and, after it was once settled, to strengthen and confirm it; Methods altogether unscriptural; Methods destructive of Christian Charity, and highly prejudicial to the Souls of Men; Methods directly tending to weaken the Protestant Interest, and much to disserve Religion in general among us; when they that had the Management discover'd such a Spirit, I think they who were for making the Scripture their Standard, had the more reason to withstand their Encroachments, (which were likely enough to improve in time) unless they would run the hazard of the entire loss of their Purity and Liberty too, and have a hand in betraying both their Civil and Religious Rights. And this I think may be very safely mention'd even by *one that pretends to study Peace and Reconciliation* too, as long as he has so much reason to believe, that no true Peace and Reconciliation can possibly be effected, while such a Spirit is cherished, palliated, or justified. It is urg'd, without *any Reflection upon the weakness of it*, because it is thought to have a great deal of strength in it. And as for an *Antidote against the Poison of it*, that must be left to those who are able to contribute any thing to a Cure. But that a mentioning of that assuming Spirit that lies at the bottom

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of

p. 78.

of all our Impositions, should be represented as a supporting and caressing People in all their most unreasonable and foolish Prejudices, and a multiplying Objections against the Church, at the expence of Charity and Judgment, is a sign that I have here touch'd upon a fore place. I am told, if this be thought a good reason for Nonconformity, then the Gentleman sees no hopes of putting an end to it, even upon the grounds we our selves desire. I answer; That as for the Objection taken from the assuming Spirit of the Church, which has done so much to draw off the Affections of some Men from it, it will immediately be remov'd as soon as ever that assuming Spirit is laid aside. 'Tis said, *No Abatements or Amendments in the Church, its Discipline, Government, or Liturgy, can possibly remove such Objections as this.* I answer; Let but the Church make the same Abatements in its Settlement as Christ has done in his Gospel; let her but Amend by dropping all unscriptural Additions; and when she has done, leave Men at liberty to act according to their own Light, without Bonds and Oaths, and ensnaring Obligations; and as for this Objection, 'tis effectually remov'd: But till then, as much as Mr. Hoody despises it, he must allow others to apprehend it has some force.

'Tis added, *Nor can there ever be reviv'd a Spirit of Love, and a desire of Union amongst us, whilst little Conscience is made of putting the worst Construction upon the Actions of others, and then bringing their Persons into the Quarrel; of prejudicing Men against a Cause, by what hath no more relation to it (in truth) than the most distant thing in nature.* Which is freely granted him. And therefore he would have done well to have shewn what better Construction the Actions of the High Church Party, mention'd under this Argument, wou'd

have born, than what is here put upon them: And how we can avoid bringing those Persons into the Quarrel, who have made what Quarrel there is among us, and settled such a Bottom as is like to perpetuate that Quarrel: And he should have added some Evidence, that the Political Methods of the Church, to settle and confirm absolute Conformity to their Constitution, has no more relation to the Nonconformity of the Refusers, than the most distant thing in nature. Without this, his warm Discourse has more in it of an *Invective*, than the Argument he inveighs against.

But he goes on: *Supposing these Accusations of the Clergy true, and supposing the Crime as great as you please; does it follow, because some of the Ruling Clergy have been rigid Taskmasters, have been Men of ill Tempers, or severe in their Attempts to bring Men to Conformity, therefore the People ought not to Conform?* I answer; Tho' it don't follow because some of the Clergy were ill temper'd and severe, therefore People ought not to conform; yet if those that had the ascendant when the Settlement was fix'd, besides their unscriptural Impositions which could not be justify'd, took such measures as the People found were likely to ensnare their Consciences, and convey'd such Principles to their Successors as tended to obstruct all Relief, I can't see how the People could be oblig'd to conform. Tho' their *Conformity* would not oblige Men to approve of the *Tempers and Actions of every Man that conform'd*, yet it would have bid fair for subjecting them to the pleasure of those, to whom they were under no obligation in Conscience to be subject in such matters. That their *Conformity* would have wholly put an end to the *Rigors and assuming Pretensions of the Ruling Clergy*, is to me to the full as likely as that our

general subscribing to the *Council of Trent*, should keep out Popery; and indeed not much more. And their being Nonconformists, in consideration of these Rigors, (to which the Act of Uniformity open'd a way) while yet these Rigors were used because they were Nonconformists, is no more inconsistent, than 'tis for Persons to be Protestants in consideration of the Cruelty of the Roman Church, while yet that Cruelty is used towards People because they are Protestants.

As for what follows in Mr. *Hoadly*, it so fully expresses my sense, that I shall take the freedom to borrow his Words, without any variation.

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Would Men that write in such Causes but consider, that they write in the presence of God, and that they are to answer for every Insinuation, and every unreasonable Aggravation; for every thing they say that may blind the Eyes, and prejudice the Understanding of their Readers; for every hindrance that they lay in the way to Peace and Union; for every Word and Sentence that may incense the divided Parties of Christians against one another; we should not see so frequently in Books of Controversie the Marks of Passion and stubborn Prejudice, where nothing ought to be seen but Reason and Good-nature, and a disposition inclin'd to put the most favourable Constructions upon the Designs of others; where nothing ought to be seen but what tends to the composing the unhappy Differences, between Men of the same Nation, and the same Profession. We all pretend to lament our Dissentions, and to wish for a perfect Union; but when will it be seen, that we shall study not to offend, or incense those whom we differ from? When shall we learn to argue without Reflexions, or Railing? When shall the Contest between us be, not who shall say the bitterest things, who shall use the most

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most severe and cutting Language, who shall vex and irritate his Adversary most, or who shall keep up his Party most effectually; but who shall represent things with most truth and candor; who shall contribute most to the setting things in a due light; who shall most effectually pave the way to Peace and Concord, remove Mens Prejudices, sweeten their Tempers, and draw their Affections nearer to one another? But what end is there of Division and Hatred, when Men cannot be contented with the best Reasoning their Cause will bear, but are ever burthening it with Aggravations, which always work more than Arguments, and never fail to destroy Christian Charity in the World? This Thought hath its use in all Controversies, and especially in this. I heartily wish it may have the same effect upon all others, as I hope it will ever have upon me. I hope the Gentleman wont like this Passage in his own Book and dislike it in mine.

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But 'tis now high time to proceed to the latter part of the Tenth Chapter of my *Abridgment*, which goes on thus:

“ Things being in the Posture that hath been
 “ thus briefly represented; the National Con-
 “ stitution being so contriv'd, as to keep out
 “ many, both Ministers and People, who were
 “ truly Conscientious, upon such accounts as
 “ those mention'd; it was a very natural Que-
 “ stion, What must they do? Without the
 “ Cross and Sponsors, there was no Baptism
 “ to be had; without Kneeling, no Commu-
 “ nion; without submitting, in many Parishes,
 “ to unqualify'd Guides, there was no room
 “ left, by the Law, for Ministerial Instruction,
 “ and Pastoral Help; and were the things re-
 “ quir'd, own'd to be in themselves lawful, there
 “ was no falling wholly in with them, without
 “ practical submitting to a pretended Authority
 “ of making new Terms of Communion, which

“ was more than it could be made appear
 “ our Blessed Lord had entrusted any Mortals
 “ with. How then must they
 “ steer? Must they sit still with-
 “ out any Ordinances at all?
 “ Or, must they go against their
 “ Consciences, that they might
 “ enjoy them? Must they be con-
 “ tented to be depriv'd of the

See this Branch of the
 Argument handled at large
 in Mr. How's Letter to a
 Person of *Quality*, who
 took offence at Dean Stil-
 lingfleet's Sermon.

“ necessary Means of Salvation? Must they live
 “ like Pagans till they got rid of their Scruples?
 “ That certainly would be unbecoming Christi-
 “ ans; and unaccountable in such as knew the
 “ worth of Souls, and the weight of things Eter-
 “ nal. And if not, then they must take fitting
 “ opportunities of worshipping God according
 “ to their Consciences, in a freedom from en-
 “ snaring Impositions; being careful, in the
 “ mean time, to maintain Love and Charity to-
 “ wards those from whom they differ'd. And
 “ this was the course they accordingly took, hav-
 “ ing sometimes the Smiles, and sometimes the
 “ Frowns of the Government; being sometimes
 “ Tolerated, and sometimes Abridg'd; till at
 “ last the fruitfulness of Rigor and Severity be-
 “ ing generally evident, they were taken under
 “ the publick Protection, and had their Liberty
 “ allow'd them by King, Lords, and Com-
 “ mons.

“ In the mean while, among other Charges
 “ that were brought against them, none made
 “ more noise than that of *Schism*. Both Mini-
 “ sters and People, upon the account of their
 “ separate Assemblies, were cry'd out upon from
 “ Press and Pulpit, as dangerous *Schismatics*,
 “ and under that notion brought under a po-
 “ pular *Odium*, and laden with unspeakable Re-
 “ proach: A great Dust was rais'd, with which
 the

“ the Eyes of many were too much affected, for
 “ them to discern distinctly the Merits of the
 “ Cause in debate. This hath been an usual
 “ Method, and is no new Invention. A Mem-
 “ ber of their own, the Ingenious Mr. *Hales* of
 “ *Eaton*, (who by a good token hath had a great
 “ many hard Words for his pains) told them
 “ long ago, *That Heresie and Schism are two Theo-*
 “ *logical Scare-crows, used by those that seek to up-*
 “ *hold a Party in Religion, to terrify their Opposites.*
 “ However, they weigh’d the matter, consider’d
 “ the grounds of the Charge brought against
 “ them, found themselves Innocent, and made
 “ their Appeal to the Unprejudic’d and Impar-
 “ tial, in divers *Apologetick* Writings. They
 “ pleaded that their Practice was not what the *Moderate*
 “ Scripture calls *Schism*. As *Schism* is there re- *Noncon-*
 “ presented, it lies not so much in variety of *formists*
 “ Opinions, or different Practices, Modes or *no Schis-*
 “ Forms, or different Places of Worship, as in *maticks.*
 “ a want of true Love and Charity. For, as
 “ *Heresie* is oppos’d to the *Faith*, so is *Schism*
 “ oppos’d to *Love*; and both *Heresie* and *Schism*
 “ are distinguish’d by those things to which each
 “ of them is oppos’d. This they evidenced by
 “ a distinct Consideration of the several Passages
 “ of Scripture, where *Schism* is mention’d;
 “ which do all of them so evidently point at *Un-*
 “ *charitableness*, as the discriminating Badge of
 “ *Schismaticks*, as gave them abundant Satisfacti-
 “ on they were free from guilt in this respect,
 “ tho’ separating of Communion, so long as they
 “ took care not to violate that Love and Cha-
 “ rity which ought to be among Christians. He
 “ that is conversant with Scripture, may easily
 “ observe, that there may be *Schism*, or a Schis-
 “ matical Spirit, working in a Church, where
 “ there is no local Separation; and there may

“ be a *Separation* and yet no *Schism* on the Part
 “ of them that Seperate. Nay, that there can be
 “ no *Schism* in Scripture account where there is
 “ not an uncharitable alienation of Christians
 “ Hearts from each other, because of their Dif-
 “ fering apprehensions about Lesser things of Re-
 “ ligion. This being the true Scripture notion
 “ of *Schism*, they thought it very Evident, that
 “ some on each side in this Debate, may be un-
 “ der Guilt, but that all on neither side were
 “ fairly chargeable: Particularly, that all those
 “ who seperate from the *Church of England* are
 “ not justly chargeable in this Respect, there
 “ being many among them, who tho’ they’ll freely
 “ give their Brethren of the Establish’d Church
 “ the Preference in many other things, will yet
 “ vye with them for a free, large, and Extensive
 “ charity.

“ Passing from the Scriptures to the Primitive
 “ Fathers, they found many of their Exclamations
 “ against the Sin of *Schism* very warm and severe,
 “ and Perhaps it may be made appear that some
 “ of them, might lay more stress (in their Re-
 “ presentation of the thing they so heavily Cen-
 “ sur’d) on the bare Separation, and less on an
 “ uncharitable Spirit and Temper, than we can
 “ discern in Scripture, which was their proper
 “ standard as well as ours: But be that as it will,
 “ the Poor Branded *Dissenters* have not stuck to
 “ own, that the Heavy Censures of the Primi-
 “ tive Fathers, were better Grounded than our
 “ Modern Invectives, and they give this Reason
 “ for it, which deserves to be Consider’d; *viz.*
 “ Because the Church in those times made no
 “ other Terms of Communion, than Christ had
 “ made to her Hands: Whereas ’tis now quite
 “ otherwise. And yet they found even as severe
 “ a Person as *St. Cyprian*, declaring that a *Con-*
 “ *sciencious*

“ *scienceious* People ought to Separate themselves from
“ a *Scandalous and Wicked Pastour*; whence they
“ inferr’d, that there may be some just Grounds
“ of Separation, even in the sence of the Fa-
“ thers: And that even where there may be
“ the true Faith, and acceptable Worship;
“ where all sacred ordinances may be Validly
“ administred, and nothing that is necessary to
“ Salvation be wanting: And Consequently
“ Separation even from a true Church, where
“ Ordinances are valid, and nothing necessary is
“ wanting, is not in their Esteem, (if they are
“ consistent with themselves) presently *Damnable*
“ *Schism*.

“ They farther pleaded, that their Separati-
“ on was not *chosen* and *Voluntary*, but *forc’d* and
“ *Constrain’d*. They were cast out of the Church
“ by their *Impositions* and *Excommunicated* by
“ their *Canons*: On which account many of
“ the *Laudensian* Faction, even to this Day deny
“ them *Christian Burial*; (as the charitable
“ *Mr. Robert Burscough* of *Totness*, and others.)
“ They were free to hold constant communion
“ with the *Establish’d* Church, upon those Terms
“ which *Christ* had made necessary either to vi-
“ sible or *Real Christianity*, or to the Exercise
“ of the *Ministry*; but were rejected with
“ scorn without farther *Compliance*, in Things
“ which after the utmost search, they could not
“ find the *Word of God* would warrant. So
“ that they did not throw out themselves, but
“ were *Rejected*: They did not *Volunta-*
“ *rily* separate, but were *forc’d* to it: They
“ were *passive* and not *active*: And having *Peti-*
“ *tioned*, and *Expostulated*, *Pray’d*, and waited
“ for a long time to little purpose, they could
“ not see any remaining *Duty* Lying upon them,
“ but to provide for the *Necessities* of their Souls
“ and

“ and the Worship of God, in the best manner
 “ they could, with safety to their Consciences;
 “ maintaining Love and Charity towards those
 “ who Rejected them, and waiting patiently till
 “ they should become sensible of their unbrot-
 “ ly Treatment of them, and Open the Door for
 “ their Restauration.

“ They farther pleaded, that if there were
 “ a *Schism* among us, it most properly lay at
 “ their Door, who laid the foundation of it by
 “ their scrupled *Impositions*, and might remove
 “ it, and prevent the dismal Consequences they
 “ so much complain of, by leaving the things
 “ that are so straitly enjoyn’d, in their proper
 “ natural Indifference. They found, that the
 “ main Inlet of all the Distractions, Confusions,
 “ and Divisions of the Christian World, hath
 “ been the adding other Conditions of Church-
 “ Communion than Christ hath done. They
 “ could meet with no Charter that he had given
 “ to any Persons, whether they were cloth’d
 “ with a Civil or an Ecclesiastical Authority,
 “ containing any Power of making such Imposi-
 “ tions.

“ They durst not therefore encourage such
 “ Pretensions. If they would drop them, the
 “ *Schism* would vanish. If they were fonder of
 “ them, than of Peace and Unity, they thought
 “ it a sign, that they hardly believed themselves,
 “ when they spake so warmly upon the Conse-
 “ quences of a *Schism*, they could so easily put an
 “ end to. And whereas some have pleaded, it
 “ was not in the power of the Church to make
 “ such an Alteration: The answer is easie;
 “ ’Twas in their power at King *Charles’s* Re-
 “ stauration: The King and Parliament then
 “ did nothing in Ecclesiastical Matters, without
 “ the Concurrence and Influence of the Bishops
 “ and

“ and the Convocation. ’Twas also in their
 “ power, when King *William* ascended the va-
 “ cant Throne ; he prepar’d Matters for them,
 “ propos’d the Alteration to them, and urg’d
 “ it upon them, but to little purpose. The car-
 “ riage of the Clergy in those two Junctures is
 “ a plain Indication of their not being enclined
 “ to that Alteration, which might put a period
 “ to that *Schism*, about which they make such a
 “ noise. We cannot therefore have so bad an
 “ opinion of them, as to suppose they speak as
 “ they mean, when they represent the tragi-
 “ cal Consequences of a suppos’d *Schism*, which
 “ they might so easily have prevented and reme-
 “ died, but would not.

“ But however it is as to that, the poor *Dis-*
 “ *senters* thought that the Ingenious Mr. *Hales*’s
 “ Maxims were so clear and undoubted, as to
 “ be self-evident ; and they found themselves
 “ thereby fully justify’d. They were these : *That*
 “ *where cause of Schism is necessary, there not be*
 “ *that separates, but he that is the cause of the Se-*
 “ *paration, is the Schismatick. And, when either*
 “ *false or uncertain Conclusions are obtruded for*
 “ *truth, and Acts either unlawful or ministring just*
 “ *ground of scruple are requir’d of us, to be per-*
 “ *form’d ; in these cases consent were conspiracy,*
 “ *and open Contestation is not Faction or Schism, but*
 “ *due Christian Animosity. For that it is alike un-*
 “ *lawful to make profession of known or suspected Fal-*
 “ *shood, and to put in practice unlawful or suspected*
 “ *Actions.* And they were the more confirm’d
 “ in their adherence to these Principles, by find-
 “ ing the most eminent Divines of the Church
 “ forc’d to make use of the same Maxims, upon
 “ like grounds, in their noble Defence of the
 “ Reformation against the *Romanists*. And in-
 “ deed, it seem’d to them remarkable, that they
 “ which

“ which were reckon’d by the Clergy the most
 “ successful Weapons against the poor *Dissenters*,
 “ should be the same that are used by the *Pa-*
 “ *pists* against the *Protestant* Reformation.

“ Upon the whole, if there be a real *Schism*
 “ between the Church Party and the Moderate
 “ *Dissenters*, they have all along thought that any
 “ impartial Person must judge, that it must be
 “ charg’d upon the Imposition of Terms of Com-

“ munion, without any obligation in Conscience
 “ to make that Imposition, so much as pleaded
 “ or pretended from the nature of the things im-
 “ pos’d; rather than on the refusing compli-
 “ ance with such Impositions, under a profession
 “ that such a compliance would be against the
 “ light of their Conscience, and the best under-

“ standing they could attain of the Mind and
 “ Will of God in the Scriptures. They thought

“ that the grounds of their Dissatisfaction above-
 “ mention’d, fully prov’d, that their Separation

“ was not sinful; and therefore they apprehen-
 “ ded it should be their great Care and Endea-

“ vour to manage it so peaceably and charita-
 “ bly, as that it might not become *Schisma-*

“ *tical*.

*He that
 would see
 this matter
 fully can-
 vass’d, may
 consult*

*Corbet’s
 Point of
 Church*

*Unity and
 Schism dis-
 cuss’d.*

*Baxter’s
 Search for
 the English*

*Schisma-
 tick.*

*Owen’s
 Brief Vin-
 dication of*

the Non-

conformists, from the charge of Schism. Alsop’s Melius Inquirendum, Part 2. Ch. 24. p. 209. Wadsworth’s Separation no Schism. Henry’s Brief Enquiry into the Nature of Schism. And Tongue’s Ingenious Defence of that Enquiry.

Pag. 225, Mr. Hoadly says, it imports little to debate this
 226, 227. Point of *Schism*. And I so far agree with him,
 as to declare, that I think the matter has been
 so canvass’d already, as to make it the less need-
 ful. But whenever we are charg’d with *Schism*,
 it must necessarily be a main point, *how the word*
Schism is used in Scripture; because if that sense

of the Word which is there usual be not applicable to us, we are not *Schismatics* in the sense of Scripture. Let Men then give us that Name ever so long, so long as we are not chargeable with that *Uncharitableness* which is the Scripture Badge of *Schismatics*, we are easie.

As for what is alledg'd from Mr. *Hales*, whether it be to *our purpose* or no, I can freely leave to the Judgment of others; tho' the Maxims transcrib'd from him, had been equally true and strong had they been advanc'd by a much meaner Person. If he really thought nothing could make constant Communion unlawful with that Church, with which Occasional Communion is lawful, as Mr. *Hoadly* seems to apprehend, we desire liberty to differ from him; and so we shall from any Man in whatsoever he appears to us to differ from the Truth, tho' in other things he should be ever so much for us. But really, as long as we take but care to keep up a charitable disposition towards those we differ from, we are not afraid that the Reasoning either of Mr. *Hales*, or any other Person, should convince us of that sinful Schism which the Scriptures declare against. And as long as the Church of *England* requires us to perform *Actions that minister just ground of Scruple*, we will take leave with Mr. *Hales* to say, (and I can't see why it may not be allow'd in us, as well as in him) *that open Contestation is not Faction or Schism, but due Christian Animosity*. And we think our selves herein the safer, in that we as well as our Predecessors, are careful, in the mean time, to discover our Charity towards those we differ from.

“ A main Expedient which was pitch'd upon
 “ by the more Moderate for this Purpose, was

*Their Occasional Com-
 munion with the establish'd
 Church defended.*

“ the Communicating *Occasional-*
 “ ly with the establish'd Church,
 “ altho' they at the same time held
 “ more *stated* Communion with
 “ separate worshipping Assemblies. Hereby
 “ they thought they should show their Love and
 “ Charity unto those from whom they ordinarily
 “ separated ; and yet at the same time should
 “ show their firm adherence to their fundamental
 “ Principles, of keeping the Ordinances of Christ
 “ as he had appointed them, without additional
 “ Terms of Communion ; and of pursuing in
 “ their respective Places and Spheres a farther
 “ Reformation than has yet been reach'd a-
 “ mong us, in order to a happy Settlement.
 “ But taking this Method , they have had the
 “ common lot of those who in any case have
 “ been for keeping within a due Mediocrity ;
 “ they have been eagerly assaulted by those who
 “ have been addicted to Extreame on either hand
 “ of them, and run down as utterly inexcusable,
 “ because of their Moderation. They have let
 “ things work, in hope that Time, with Obser-
 “ vation and Experience, would open a way for
 “ the Conviction of their warmest Censurers ; till
 “ at length they have been trampled on, as if they
 “ had nothing to say in their own Defence.

“ They have been represented as Hypocrites
 “ and inconsistent with themselves, in practically
 “ owning the *Lawfulness* of the Terms of the
 “ Establish'd Church, by communicating *occasi-*
 “ *onally* with it ; while they have pleaded the
 “ Sinfulness of those Terms, in Bar to *Constant*
 “ Communion. But herein there will not ap-
 “ pear the least inconsistency, to one that ob-
 “ serves, that the Terms of Communion with the
 Establish'd

“ Establish’d Church, are not pretended to be
 “ Sinfull *Absolutely*, but only *Respectively*: It
 “ is not pleaded, that they are of the Number
 “ of the things that are so *sinful*, as that they
 “ can in no Case be *Lawful*, but among things
 “ that are Sinful or Lawful according to Cir-
 “ cumstances. And indeed most (not to say all)
 “ humane Actions, depend more upon circum-
 “ stances than we Commonly observe. Though
 “ no Action can be done, but it must have Agent,
 “ Manner, End Time, Place, and other Circum-
 “ stances attending it; yet it may be Consider’d
 “ without considering at the same time any, or
 “ all of these: And if we attend Carefully we shall
 “ find, that the very same Action as to the matter of
 “ it is made Morally good or Bad, according as
 “ the Agent is proper or improper, the Object sui-
 “ table or unfit; and the like. Thus Plentiful eating
 “ and Drinking may be morally good in some
 “ Circumstances, as well as good upon a Natural
 “ Consideration; when yet to do so every Meal,
 “ or very frequently would be very bad;
 “ ’twould be intemperate and Dangerous in point
 “ of Health. So also Fasting is Laudable and Praise
 “ Worthy, when so manag’d as that it furthers
 “ in the Divine service; but very preposterous
 “ and pernicious, when so oft repeated, as that
 “ the Body is Macerated, and the Spirits De-
 “ pauperated, and the Person concern’d unfit-
 “ ted for the service either of God or Man.

“ Circumstances give Actions their Moral
 “ goodness or Badness. ’Tis so in this Case.
 “ The very same Terms of Communion, which
 “ are unwarrantably imposed by the Church of
 “ *England*, may be Comply’d with *upon occasion*
 “ Lawfully, by those who would Act irregularly
 “ and Sinfully, should they fall in with them
 “ for a Constancy. The Action of Communi-
 “ cating

“ cating is the same indeed in Substance at one
 “ time as at another, and the Matter of that Action
 “ hath no Moral Evil in it ; so that a fit and
 “ just occasion may therefore render it fit and
 “ Laudable ; and yet the Constancy of that
 “ Action may by superadded Circumstances be
 “ made apparently Evil. To those who take
 “ things in Gross, such an Action as Commu-
 “ nicating, appears the same thing, done now and
 “ then, or for a Constancy : But if they would
 “ give themselves Leave to think soberly, they’d
 “ soon see a Great Difference.

“ The Action is the same, and not the same.
 “ ’Tis the same in one Respect, but not in others,
 “ ’Tis the same as to the substance or matter ;
 “ but not as to attending Circumstances. Com-
 “ municating *constantly* under such impositions as
 “ are in the Establish’d Church, is an Action
 “ cloath’d with such Circumstances, as make it
 “ highly Different from Communicating *Occa-*
 “ *sionally*. The one doth practically pronounce
 “ the Action Consider’d Materially to be (what
 “ indeed it is) *Lawful* : the Other doth repre-
 “ sent the same Action as *eligible* nay *preferable*
 “ which is Contrary to the inward sence of
 “ the most moderate among the *Dissenters*.
 “ Neither will the Private expression of a Dif-
 “ ferent sence be a sufficient Guard against such
 “ publick, and more forcible Language of Con-
 “ tinual practice. The one does practically af-
 “ fert the Liberty with which Christ hath made
 “ us free, in opposition to rigid seperatists : The
 “ other practically betrays our Liberty, in Com-
 “ plyance with Rigorous Imposers. The one
 “ Discovers this to be our sence, this Worship is
 “ in the main sound, though irregular and De-
 “ fective. The other on the Contrary, seems
 “ to intimate as if Divine Worship were not
 “ acceptable

“ acceptable without such superadded Formali-
 “ ties. Occasional Communion manifests, that
 “ in our apprehension, the Additions to divine
 “ Worship, that are brought into the Church
 “ of *England*, are not destructive of the Essence
 “ of Worship: Constant Communion would re-
 “ present Christ’s own Institution as defective,
 “ and not orderly or decent without them. The
 “ former condemns the uncharitably Censorious,
 “ when the other would appear to acquit Eccle-
 “ siastical Assumers. The former shews our
 “ Charity towards those whose Sentiments and
 “ common Practice differs from ours; the lat-
 “ ter would be a confining our Charity to a Par-
 “ ty, and a practical disowning and condemning
 “ all other worshipping Assemblies. This latter
 “ Consideration appears to be of great weight; in
 “ that constant Communion with the establish’d
 “ Church, is by its greatest Advocates intended
 “ to be exclusive of Communion with all others:
 “ And therefore that Church has provided, (by
 “ *Canon XI.*) That if any one speak of separate
 “ Congregations, as true Churches; they shall
 “ be Excommunicated, &c. Now these Mode-
 “ rate Dissenters have all along apprehended,
 “ that should they thus confine their Communion
 “ within the limits of that Party, (or indeed of
 “ any other Party of Christians in the Land)
 “ and avoid all other Christian Assemblies and
 “ Places of Worship, as esteeming them no true
 “ Churches, they should prove themselves desti-
 “ tute of a Christian Spirit, whatever Church
 “ they might pretend to belong to. Now where
 “ lies the Inconsistency in the case; when we
 “ don’t assert the Terms of Communion in the
 “ establish’d Church to be simply sinful, (*i. e.*
 “ that it is sinful to do the things themselves that
 “ are requir’d) while yet we assert it to be sinful

“ to bind up our selves by those Terms ; where-
 “ by we should be oblig’d to do continually, what
 “ we have only liberty to do more rarely, and
 “ upon fit Occasion.
 “ They have been farther called upon to con-
 “ sider the stress laid in Scripture upon *Peace* and
 “ *Union*, which is so great, as seems to require
 “ the sacrificing of any Pleas to things that are
 “ so valuable, so Truth and Holiness be but se-
 “ cur’d ; and they have been over and over told,
 “ that they appear not to have the due regard
 “ thereto, while they cannot sacrifice to them so
 “ much as their own greater particular Satis-
 “ faction. To which they have an easie Reply.
 “ They have as great a regard to *Peace* and *Uni-*
 “ *on* as their Brethren ; and shew it by their rea-
 “ diness to go as far in order to them, as they
 “ can conceive they lawfully may ; which they
 “ do by Occasionally Communicating with them ;
 “ but as for Constant Communion, they therefore
 “ only refuse it, because it is in their apprehen-
 “ sion unlawful to them, for the Reasons above-
 “ specify’d, notwithstanding that the Occasional
 “ be lawful. We may lawfully, for the sake of
 “ Peace and Quietness, put up Injuries and Af-
 “ fronts ; nay it is a certain Duty ; and yet to
 “ do so for a constancy, and in all cases,
 “ were so far from being lawful, that it would
 “ be a ruining our selves, and a contribution
 “ to the overthrow of common Right and Ju-
 “ stice. Tho’ I may be allow’d, nay requir’d,
 “ to sacrifice my own private Rights in many
 “ cases, to the common Peace, yet I must not
 “ endanger a publick Mischief or Ruin, for fear
 “ of a little present Disturbance. What were
 “ this, but as if for fear of disturbing a peccant
 “ Humour in the Body, we should suffer it to
 “ proceed uncontroul’d, till it prov’d fatal ? And
 “ certainly

“ certainly the offence taken by Bigots, at the
“ asserting against them a truly Christian Liberty,
“ is no better than a peccant Humour; not
“ indeed to be needlessly enrag’d, and yet much
“ less to be quietly suffer’d to become predomi-
“ nant. As for the more Moderate Dissenters,
“ they are therefore against a practical abet-
“ ting of Impositions, as being the great En-
“ gine of Disturbance and Division. They are
“ heartily desirous, if it be possible, and as
“ much as in them lies, to live peaceably with
“ all Men; and for that very reason would not
“ willingly be found Combatting those whom
“ they cannot Convince. They are free to ac-
“ knowledge, that to an offending Brother;
“ gentler Methods and Time is due; and much
“ more to a Church, that needs Reformation:
“ But the waiting time seems to be now over;
“ when the practice of such things as needed
“ Reformation is heighten’d into declar’d Pur-
“ poses of perpetual Adherence. Have not these
“ things been endeavour’d to be rivetted by a so-
“ lemn Oath never to endeavour (no not each
“ Man in his place) any Alteration in the Church?
“ Have not those who would have continu’d in
“ the Church, comply’d as far as they could
“ without guilt, been Ejected for that very rea-
“ son, because they would do all they could to
“ better it, and lest they should? And was it
“ not the declar’d sense of the Body of the Cler-
“ gy after the late happy Revolution, that no
“ Amendments were needful or desirable, or to
“ be yielded to? To what purpose then is it to
“ wait any longer? Hath not that Method been
“ try’d long enough without success? Should any
“ think, that by going off totally from the Dis-
“ senters to a full and sole Communion with the
“ Church of *England*; they might contribute

“ something towards disposing Mens Minds,
 “ and paving the way to the dear’d Alterations;
 “ they would do well to consider, that they have
 “ very little reason to hope to gain that Cha-
 “ racter and Reputation with the High-Church-
 “ Party, as should make them of any significance,
 “ unless they would Counter-act the very design
 “ of their yielding such a compliance. Before
 “ they could insinuate themselves into any good
 “ Esteem, they must pretend their preference of
 “ what they think but tolerable; and therefore
 “ would go into the Church, that they might
 “ contribute to its Amendment in; nay they’ll
 “ find it will be expected they should shew a ha-
 “ tred and contempt of what they think prefer-
 “ able, and would go into the Church to make
 “ way for. In a word, they would not be able
 “ to make their way to the doing the good they
 “ aim at, but by speaking and acting contrary, both
 “ to sincerity, and to the very end they propose
 “ to themselves. For if they who have always ad-
 “ her’d to the establish’d Church, are suspected
 “ when Moderate, and exploded when appearing
 “ to desire or endeavour any Reformation; it is
 “ but consentaneous to Reason to expect, that they
 “ who come off to it, must be much more so.

“ Upon the whole, the Moderate Dissenters
 “ think they have sufficiently acquitted themselves
 “ as lovers of *Peace* and *Union*, by shewing their
 “ readiness to do any thing in order to it, which
 “ they can conceive they lawfully may do. Nay
 “ they think they have herein out-done their
 “ Brethren of the establish’d Church, who might
 “ have e’re this remov’d the Hindrances of
 “ *Peace* and *Union*, without any danger of sin-
 “ ning, but would not. Notwithstanding their
 “ continu’d refusal, they yet shew their peaceable
 “ Disposition, by Communicating Occasionally
 “ with them; and cannot conceive, that even

“ the God of Peace and Order does allow Christians to follow external Peace and Order, to the great and apparent prejudice of inward Peace and general Purity ; and therefore they dare go no farther.

“ They have been farther charg'd, as being herein wanting in their Duty to the Civil Magistrate ; but in their apprehension very undeservedly, since, upon the strictest Enquiry, they cannot find themselves justly blameable. They are ready to demonstrate their regard to Civil Governors, by submission to what they should less choose, nay to what would be to them a Hardship : But in what is in their judgment (after the utmost search) sinful, they dare not comply, as looking upon themselves Countermanded by a superiour Authority. This Article of the Controversie hath been manag'd very wordily ; but after all that has been said, they are fully satisfy'd in this, that Obedience to Magistrates in constant Communion with the establish'd Church, cannot be made appear to be a Duty, any farther than the thing it self is evidenc'd to be lawful. 'Tis commonly asserted, that we have more certainty, that we are bound to obey Authority in all lawful things, than we have that what is requir'd of us is unlawful. Be it so ; yet the certainty of its being our Duty to obey Authority in all lawful things, can no farther affect our Consciences, than as we have evidence that what is requir'd is in its attending Circumstances lawful. Be this Principle undoubted and confess'd, yet that it is rightly apply'd, and cogent or binding in the present case, can be no clearer or surer to us, than 'tis clear and sure that the things requir'd are lawful. Should Parents, upon their own Judgment, or

“ any sinister Considerations, plead their Authority with a Child for his marrying a *Papist*,
 “ urging his Obligation to obey them in all things lawful; if he in the mean time but
 “ doubts the lawfulness of complying with them in this matter, he hath a sufficient Counter-
 “ plea, *viz.* That, the thing requir'd appears not among those lawful things; and yet he may
 “ comply so far, as Civil Occasional Converse with *Papists* may be manag'd without dangerous Temptation. Tho' a Son in such a case
 “ were not able to demonstrate the unlawfulness of entire compliance with his Parents commands, yet it were sufficient that they could
 “ not clear to him the lawfulness of so doing; since 'tis upon that Supposition only that the
 “ Argument hath any force in it. And it is the same also in the present case.

“ They have been also charg'd as *Temporizers*, in Communicating Occasionally with the establish'd Church, because it was necessary to
 “ Self-preservation, when the Laws against Dissenters were rigorously executed, and hath been necessary to the holding any Post in the
 “ Government, ever since the Sacramental Test. To which they have this to say, That let Men
 “ make what Clamours they please, whoever will fairly consider Matters will find, that it is
 “ not a matter of Policy, but plain Duty, to do what we lawfully may do in all its Circum-
 “ stances, in order to Self-preservation, and the preventing Ruin; and also in order to the
 “ more general Usefulness. What is indeed unlawful, may not be done; but what is in all
 “ its Circumstances lawful, ought to be done in such a case; and that Occasional Commu-
 “ nion is of the number of such lawful things, hath been all along held by the more Mode-
 “ rate

" rate Dissenters. This Opinion of theirs
 " was not taken up with the Sacramental Test,
 " but was own'd long before by many of their
 " most noted Ministers, and most intelligent Ad-
 " herents : And having declar'd that for their
 " Opinion, and regulated their Practice by it,
 " from the beginning of their Nonconformity,
 " they could see no reason why the superinducing
 " such a Test, should make any change or alte-
 " ration, either in their Principle, or corre-
 " spondent Practice. And whereas they have
 " upon this account been censur'd as guilty of
 " Carnal Policy, it will appear to any impartial
 " Observers, one of the falsest and most sense-
 " less Charges in the World. For, had the more
 " Moderate Dissenters any Self interest to serve
 " and pursue, separate from the common Good,
 " they must have been wretchedly overseen if
 " they had not taken a quite different Method.
 " For their particular Interest hath been far from
 " being serv'd by this means, nor was there any
 " likelihood it should. They might with much
 " greater ease make and hold fast their Party,
 " by suggesting an utter unlawfulness of Commu-
 " nicating at all with the establish'd Church,
 " than they can convey the distinction to com-
 " mon Capacities, by which they must defend
 " themselves, and engage the adherence of o-
 " thers in a constant Communion in their sepa-
 " rate Assemblies, while they professedly allow
 " them an Occasional one elsewhere. For the
 " Minds of Men are generally for taking things
 " in gross, and accounting them altogether Good,
 " or altogether Bad, and are impatient, if not
 " incapable, of attending to those differencing
 " Circumstances, which render an Action that
 " is the same for substance, one while and in
 " this respect lawful, and another while and in

“ another respect unlawful. And in being wil-
 “ ling, for the sake of Truth and Charity, to
 “ run this apparent hazard, they have all along
 “ thought they have been sufficiently clear’d from
 “ this Imputation.

“ They have been also warmly assaulted upon
 “ the Head of *Scandal*; and told by some, that
 “ their Occasional Communicating with the esta-
 “ blish’d Church, which they thought lawful,
 “ led others, in imitation of them, to such a
 “ compliance as they judg’d sinful. Their Re-
 “ ply was not to seek. Were Occasional Com-
 “ munion absolutely indifferent; had they not
 “ been oblig’d to it, for the testification of their
 “ Charity, and other binding Reasons, they were
 “ not then to use their liberty, for fear of mis-
 “ guiding others by that Practice, which they
 “ might, without Sin, have altogether omitted:
 “ But when what they did as Duty, and with
 “ all that guard which the discharge of that Duty
 “ would allow, is misconstru’d, ’tis not a Scandal
 “ given, but only taken. They were also told by
 “ others, that this liberty they took in Commu-
 “ nicating Occasionally, was matter of Scandal
 “ to many in the Church of *England*, who were
 “ hereby confirm’d in their way, and led to
 “ think, that their Impositions were justify’d by
 “ their thus abetting them; and they self-con-
 “ demn’d, by not falling heartily in with them.
 “ In which case, they had this to say for them-
 “ selves, That the largest Charity is always lia-
 “ ble to the most misconstructions; and that
 “ when they only discover’d their sense of the
 “ bare lawfulness of Communicating with them,
 “ while their stated Separation, with their ready
 “ defence of it (when call’d) shew’d they were
 “ far from apprehending it preferable, if
 “ this should be interpreted as an Encouraging
 “ them

“ them, it would be through a faulty want of
 “ Consideration, and the blame must lie at their
 “ own door. And when they were told by o-
 “ thers, that they ought to mind the Apostles
 “ Charge, and *mark those who cause Divisions,*
 “ their Practice answer’d for them, That it was
 “ their great Endeavour to keep from Extreams,
 “ and mark uncharitable Dividers on both hands
 “ of them; that so by carrying it with as disin-
 “ terested an Integrity as was possible, between
 “ the furious Bigots on both sides, they might
 “ both *save themselves from the untoward Genera-*
 “ *tion in which they liv’d,* and do what they could
 “ to pave the way for that *Coalition of the more*
 “ *Moderate of all sorts,* which was the thing that
 “ from first to last appear’d to them *most desira-*
 “ *ble,* and which (they yet conceive) *will at*
 “ *last be found necessary to our common Secu-*
 “ *rity.*

Mr. Hoadly here tells me, he must not be so p. 188.
unjust to our Cause, and his own Design, as to pass
by the Reasons offer’d to prove constant Communion
with the Church of England sinful, &c. But he has
 left us sufficient Reason to complain, that how
just soever he has been to his own Design, he has
 not done us *justice* in representing this matter of
Occasional and Constant Communion with the esta-
 blish’d Church. For,

1. He sometimes unfairly disguises our Sense.
 Thus he would insinuate as if we affirm’d *Occasio-*
nal Communion with the Church, to be the general
 Duty of the Dissenters, nay, *their indispensable* *Ib. 180.*
Duty; which is no where asserted; nor can it *& 206.*
 fairly be collected from any thing advanc’d. ’Tis
 granted indeed, That that Charity is a general
 Duty, of which Occasional Communion is in some
 cases a very fit and proper Expression: But whe-
 ther

ther particular Dissenters are in Duty bound to express their Charity in that way, is a thing, the determination of which depends upon Circumstances.

When he talks then of my *express affirming this Occasional Communion to be an indispensable Duty*, he makes me affirm what I never thought. For tho' I'm well satisfy'd it may be the Duty of some to yield to it, yet in whatever Circumstances it would do more hurt than good, I can easily *dispence* with forbearance, and cannot see how it can be a Duty.

p. 215.

Again, He would insinuate, that we *acknowledge the things impos'd in the Church, to be in themselves lawful*; and thence he forms a mighty Argument: Whereas, in that very Discourse on which he was making Remarks, it was shewn, that sinfulness and lawfulness in this case depend upon *Circumstances*; and that the *Circumstances of Communicating Constantly and Occasionally* are so different, as may make the one sinful to those to whom the other may be lawful.

p. 187.

Again, He charges me with *arguing against Conformity in one Page, from one Consideration, and in the next from another absolutely inconsistent with it*: And talks as if I did ill to intimate it was contrary to the sense of the Moderate Dissenters, by Constant Communion, to represent the way of Worship in the Church of *England* as preferable to a more simple, less gaudy, and more scriptural sort of Worship; their preference of which, (while they at the utmost could think it only tolerable) would be necessary to the pleasing High Church, if they entirely Conform'd: Whereas their not preferring the Church way, might, I think, be allow'd to be a good Argument why they should not confine themselves to it for a constancy: And the High Church insist-

ing

ing so much upon this Preference in the Case of those who are Constant Conformists, is as good an Argument, that there is not much room for a Rational Hope of contributing to a farther Reformation of the Church by such as go wholly over to it, while they cannot therein concur with them. I wont say he is *violently set against all thoughts of Justice*, that can represent these things as inconsistent, but I think verily he has no great cause to boast either of his Justice or Candour. Once more; He under a mistake represents me as *resolv'd to Conform, and joyn constantly with the Liturgy, upon some few Amendments and Alterations*: Where by *joyning constantly with the Liturgy*, he intends a Disclaiming Worshipping God without it: Whereas I am utterly against any such Constancy, as would exclude a Charitable Regard to other Worshipping Assemblys, and a joining sometimes with them; and I believe ever shall. These are such *Misrepresentations* as leave room for just Complaint.

2. He treats those among the Dissenters, most unkindly, who manifest the Greatest Charity, and come the nearest to the Church of which he is so fond: Which to me I must confess appears neither *Just* nor *Candid*. Thus he says, *it is manifest and what is universally complain'd of by the Establish'd Ministers, that there is hardly any Occasional Communicant who ever comes near the Church, but precisely at that time when the whole Parish knows he must come to qualify himself for some Office.* When as the Contrary is notorious. Mr. Baxter Dr. Bates, and many others often Communicated with the Church of England, without aiming at an Office, or being capable of any. And many of the People too herein imitated their Example. And if the instances of this kind are not so numerous now as formerly, it must be

be ascrib'd to the Gross Misrepresentations of the Gronnds of their Practise by our Angry Brethren, and their warm Invectives. This Practise was used by many among the Dissenters on purpose to *shew their Charity to those from whom they Dissented*, before it was necessary to qualify for Offices. On which Account I think it had been but *Just* as well as Brotherly in Mr. Hoadly to have spar'd his Reflections. Again he says our Occasional Communion, makes our separation, *much more unaccountable*. As if our Charity to them in coming as near them as we with safety can, made our not falling entirely in with them the more inexcusable. Should we follow the Pattern, and tell *Low Church* that is ready to make us some Concessions, that their yielding in some things, makes their adhering to others much *more unaccountable*, it would be thought hard: And as for such as are Equal Judges, they'll go near to have the same Apprehensions, of their treating us in the same manner.

3. He Confounds things widely different, that he may represent those whom he opposes as inconsistent. Thus he represents Constant Communion in the Sacrament of the Lords supper only, and entire Communion in all Ordinances of Worship, as one and the same thing. Things Lawful in themselves separate from their Circumstances and things Lawful in the Circumstances in which they are requir'd, appear with him incapable of Distinction. Things not sinful in themselves, he represents as Lawful in any Circumstances. A Worship *materially Lawful*, is with him every way Lawful. such a Worship he thinks cannot but be *very Lawful*; and yet that will take in all Worship, till he can find a sort of it that is *materially unlawful*: Which I doubt he'd find difficult to assign. When as the *matter* of Worship is ever

Lawful,

p. 207.

p. 186.

Lawful, if it be but apply'd to a right Object, by an Agent rightly dispos'd, in order to a right End &c. He tells us that *the Impositions may lawfully be comply'd with as being not materially Sinful.* And will there be any room then left to exclude impositions of any sort? Are those of the Church of Rome more *materially Sinful*, than those of the Church of England if we abstract from Circumstances? I must needs say, I can't see how any Man can do us *justice*, that argues with us upon such Principles as these; which create Confusion, in things that of themselves are sufficiently plain and clear. He goes upon the like Mistakes, in his *Perswasive to Lay-Conformity.* Telling the Dissenters, that their *Constant Conformity to the Establish'd Church*, was *in their own Judgments Lawful.* This runs through his whole Discourse both there and here. And yet he has never consider'd our Distinction, nor prov'd we don't go as far, as we own'd we *Lawfully* could go. Had we taken such a Method, he'd have been free in his Exclamations.

Persw.
p. 37.

But I must not be *so unjust* to Him as not distinctly to consider his large Discourse upon *Constant and Occasional Communion*, which falls under these three Heads.

1. He endeavours to prove that *the Circumstances I mention'd don't attend on Constant Communion, or don't make it unlawful: And that the like Circumstances attend on our Occasional Communion and our Separation.*

2. He farther adds, that *supposing some inconvenient Circumstances do attend upon Constant Communion; yet that besides such like Circumstances, much worse do unavoidably attend upon Separation, and make it much more unlawful, and much less eligible.*

3. He pursues a Comparison between *those who blameably impose Terms of Communion, and still adhere to the imposition of them; and those who acknowledge the things impos'd to be in themselves lawful; and yet Love not Peace and Unity so well as to submit to them.* I shall Consider what he has suggested under each of these severally.

p. 183.

1. Then, he asserts that *the Circumstances I mention'd, don't attend on Constant Communion with the Church of England, or don't make it unlawful: And that the like Circumstances attend on our Occasional Communion, and our separation.* This well prov'd I'll own would be much to the Purpose. Let's see then how he makes it out. I had said, that it was our sense, that *Communicating constantly with the Establish'd Church under its present impositions, would represent the Worship of that Church, not only as Lawful, but as eligible, nay preferable.* This he

p. 184.

utterly denys. And says, that *his Constant joyning with the Establish'd Worship, can only prove that he thinks it materially Lawful, and upon some Considerations preferable to Separation, without which he cannot joyn with other forms of Worship.* But it should have

p. 185.

been Consider'd, whether after repeated Refusals of Amendment in order to a Greater Conformity to the Rule of Scripture, a Constant joining with the Establish'd Worship, is not justly liable to be interpreted a preferring it to any other Mode of Worship. I don't indeed doubt but many do joyn ordinarily with the Establish'd Church, upon the grounds he mentions; as counting their worship *materially Lawful and preferable to Separation*: But tis query'd whether if they really apprehended the Mode of Worship among the Dissenters was more agreeable to the mind and will of God revealed in Scripture, they would Act either wisely or safely, by constantly joyning in the Establish'd Worship, to encourage

courage those who prefer that sort of Worship before any other, to believe they were of the same mind with them, and to strengthen them in their opposition against a farther Reformation. His Instance suits our purpose more than his. *When (says he) you keep company constantly with any Person, no one can say, unless you tell them, whether you do this, because you think his company, in it self, preferable, in all respects, to that of others; or because there are some other Considerations sufficient to determine you to it; as Interest, or Usefulness, or the hope of doing Good, or the like. But I must beg leave to differ from him. For when a Man has two Companions that offer, for him to slight the one, and keep company constantly and exclusively with the other, is, in my weak Judgment, a giving him the preference. The thing speaks for it self, whether he tells me that is his design or not. A Man indeed may now and then Occasionally converse with one that is not, upon several accounts, so agreeable to him as some others; sundry Considerations may be sufficient to determine him to it: His Interest may engage him; a prospect of Usefulness may be a sufficient inducement; a hope of doing Good, or the like, may thus far prevail with him: But none of these Considerations can or ought to be sufficient to determine a Man to keep company constantly and exclusively with one whose company is not judg'd preferable to that of others.*

But he goes on, and says, *That our Occasional Communion with the Church of England does represent the Worship of it as preferable at this particular time, in order to the shewing our Charity: And as such Occasional Communion does not represent it as preferable on any other consideration but that; so constant Communion doth not of necessity represent it preferable on any other considerations, but the publick* p. 186.
Peace;

Peace, and universal Advantage of this Church and Nation. That constant Communion with the establish'd Church necessarily implies a preference of its Worship before any other, on its own account, was not asserted. It may not be so in those who apprehend *the Church has a power to decree Rites and Ceremonies*, and who apprehend themselves oblig'd to own this Power of the Church, by complying with all its Impositions in things that are not forbidden. Their Principle may oblige them to the stated use of a way of Worship which they may not prefer. But 'tis otherwise with them who own no such Power. They reckoning themselves at liberty to choose that way of Worship which, upon search, appears to them most Scriptural, should they constantly keep to the Church, it would imply they prefer'd the way of Worship therein used, before any other, as more scriptural. Did worshipping God in the way of the Church of *England necessarily* represent their way of Worship, as in it self, preferable, it would do so in the case of all that constantly join'd in it, which is not pretended: And yet it does not follow that it would not argue such a preference, in those so firmly persuaded as to the liberty God has left them in these matters, as are the Occasional Conformists, should they be prevail'd with to join in it for a constancy.

It is absurd to insinuate to such, that their *constant Communion* would only represent the joining with the establish'd Church as eligible, nay preferable, on the account of *Peace, and Concord, and publick Advantages*: For while it is with them a fix'd Principle, that they are bound statedly to use that mode of Worship which appears, upon search, to be most scriptural, should they statedly use the publick Worship of the Church, and

no other, they would, by so doing, declare to the World they prefer'd it as most Scriptural. *Peace, and Concord, and publick Advantages,* might prevail with such to Communicate Occasionally; consistently with their Principle, without such a preference: But that Man, that reckoning himself at liberty to choose for himself, and judging himself bound to choose for a constancy the way of Worship that he apprehends is most agreeable to Scripture, should join constantly with the Church of *England*, in its present state, would be utterly inconsistent with himself; in pretending to be sway'd only by such Considerations as those mention'd, disclaiming a preference. *The most Moderate among the Dissenters* cannot think it lawful to join constantly with a Worship that is only materially lawful, to the excluding what they think themselves oblig'd to prefer, *viz.* a way of Worship that is more scriptural: They cannot but think, that this, instead of being *for the universal good of the Church*, would be very detrimental to its Purity; And for that reason, tho' if the Liturgy were so amended, as that its Expression and Method was scriptural, and it was freed of obnoxious Expressions and Tautologies, they might ordinarily join in it in the entrance of publick Worship, yet they could not do it to the exclusion of their own method of free Prayer, suited to Times; Seasons; and Circumstances. The latter is what, it is freely own'd, they generally prefer; and therefore without liberty for it, they cannot be satisfy'd. But tho' they do prefer it, yet it does not follow, but if the Liturgy were, as to the Matter and Manner, render'd unexceptionable; they might agree to join that with it, without *contradicting themselves*: Nor does it follow, but that while not only the Liturgy re-

p. 189.

mains unreform'd, but sundry other unwarrantable Impositions are added to the publick Worship, they may refuse to join constantly in it, for this reason, among others, That they mayn't seem to prefer a less scriptural, before a more scriptural mode of Worship. And finally, Let him represent our *Separation* as he pleases, he knows we utterly disclaim the Principle, *That whatsoever stands in need of Amendment, requires our Separation*; and therefore we are not chargeable with it: Whereas 'tis our fix'd apprehension, that we ought not constantly to join in the establish'd Worship of the Church, while we may worship God in a more scriptural way; that when we have free liberty left us of God, we ought to choose what we esteem preferable; and that therefore we could not choose constant Communion with the establish'd Church, (to the utter relinquishing all other Christian Societies among us) without preferring that before any other.

Again, I had also said, *That constant Communion would practically betray our Liberty in compliance with rigorous Imposers*. He says, it would no more have done it, than such a constant Communion as we were ready to exercise, had the Liturgy been amended to our minds. But, in the mean time, he forgets, that whenever such a readiness has been discover'd to Communicate ordinarily (as I rather choose to express it than constantly, for a reason that will appear in the sequel) with the publick Churches, it has been upon supposition of the securing our Liberty, by an abatement of the rigorous Impositions complain'd of. He says, *Constant Conformity in Kneeling at the Communion, is no more a betraying our Liberty, than constant Conformity in the use of a Liturgy*. Be it so: He should therefore have prov'd, if he could, that

we

we had offer'd such a *constant Conformity in the use of a Liturgy*, as should have depriv'd us of our liberty of varying with Times, Seasons, and Circumstances.

He goes on: *Nor is constant Conformity to the use of our Liturgy, as it is now, any more a betraying your Liberty, than constant Conformity to it, had it been alter'd.* For my part, I'm against any such constant Conformity to a Liturgy, be it ever so well alter'd, as should betray my Liberty; and I'm sure I am not singular. *If (says he) constant Communion would have been lawful, tho' a Liturgy had been impos'd, it is lawful tho' Kneeling be impos'd; and tho' a Form of Prayer be still impos'd. Either therefore (says he) the constant submitting to some Terms of Communion (call them Impositions or what you please) is not a practical betraying of your Liberty, and so consequently constant Communion is not; or else it is not unlawful practically to betray your Liberty, in compliance with rigorous Imposers; and so consequently, it is not unlawful to hold constant Communion with the Church of England. One of the two must be true; or you do very ill in telling us so often, how ready you have been, and still are, to comply upon some Amendments. But Mr. Hoadly seems not to take notice where the thing has all along stuck between the two Parties. On one side there is an Imposing Power warmly contended for; which on the other side is stily deny'd.*

They that disown this Power, tho' they know not what Right their Brethren have to Impose upon them, and have signify'd as much by their constant refusal of a Subscription to the 20th Article of the Church; yet could in some things that have been insisted on comply with them. On the other hand, they who are possess'd with such a notion of their Power, fancy all

such propos'd Compliances argue some sense of their Power, tho' not rais'd to the pitch they desire; and instead of making use of any such Compliances as have been offer'd as Terms of Peace, they turn them upon those that make them, and argue, that if they can own their Power in some things, they may in others. Whereas he that observes, how, in all such Proposals, they have guarded against owning such a Power, till it was better prov'd; and how carefully they have secur'd their own Liberty, (as they thought they ought to do till good reason was offer'd them to induce them to resign it) will hardly think such Treatment candid and ingenuous. I'll give a plain instance in the case of the *Liturgy*, which this Gentleman harps so much upon.

The Ministers call'd *Presbyterians*, in their first Paper of Proposals to K. Charles II. after his Restoration, thus express'd themselves about it: *We are satisfy'd (say they) in our Judgments concerning the lawfulness of a Liturgy, or Form of Worship, provided it be for the Matter agreeable to the Word of God, and fitly suited to the nature of the several Ordinances and Necessities of the Church; neither too tedious in the whole, nor compos'd of too short Prayers or Responsals; nor dissonant from the Liturgies of the Reformed Churches, nor too rigorously impos'd, nor the Minister confin'd thereunto, but that he may also make use of the Gift, of Prayer and Exhortation, which Christ hath given him, for the Service and Edification of the Church.* We are of the same mind still; and, with Mr. Hoadly's leave, think it may not be amiss, upon occasion, to declare as much. Thus far, and upon such *Amendments*, we can comply.

But then he may observe, that his Argument against us is quite enervated, by the Limitations specify'd. We can't, by such a compliance, be-
tray

tray our Liberty, because it is particularly indented for; we don't comply with rigorous Imposers; for we disclaim even a Liturgy, *too rigorously impos'd*; and our complying so far as this Overture implies, may be very safe and lawful, and yet a *constant Communicating* with the Church under its present Impositions, may still be unlawful; inasmuch as it would be a *betraying our Liberty*, beyond all hopes of ever recovering it; And an *Acquitting Ecclesiastical Assumers* too; p. 191. because attended with an owning such a Power to make rigorous Impositions, as Christ never gave them.

Could it really be made appear; that *Occasional Communion* did as much *acquit Ecclesiastical Assumers*, we should soon be as much against that, as *Constant Communion*: But we can't conceive how that can possibly be done, when our *Occasional Communion* is attended with an open disowning the Power that they pretend to; while *constant Communion*, as Matters now stand, is bottom'd upon that Power; and prov'd to do so; by the express acknowledgment, that is requir'd of all that minister in the Church, that she has such a Power; which the People abet by their constant adherence to them, and total withdrawing from the Assertors of their Christian Liberty.

Neither does *our Separation as much acquit and encourage rigid Separatists*, as our *constant Communion with the Church of England*, in its present case, would *acquit and encourage rigorous Imposers*; for the rigidness of the Separation of those of a Sectarian Spirit, lies in their *uncharitableness*: They are ready to divide those from Christ, from whom they divide themselves; and unchurch those whom they ought to own as Brethren. In this we are so far from justifying them, that we set

our selves against them upon this very account ; and to manifest we are against them, we Communicate Occasionally with the Church of *England* ; which is an evidence to all that observe it, that we count those of that Church Brethren, and cannot acquit such as so separate from them, as to deny them a Brotherly Affection. Our *Separation* don't Acquit on one hand, because it's known to proceed upon different Principles ; but *constant Communion*, on the other hand, would Acquit ; because attended with an owning and abetting the imposing Power.

p. 192.

But he goes on : *Supposing your Liberty to be invaded by these Impositions ; yet since the things requir'd are not unlawful, it is certainly lawful* (says he) *if not very commendable, for you to yield up your Liberty in a small and lawful instance, to the considerations of Peace and Union.* That there is nothing *unlawful* requir'd by the Church, in the *Circumstances* in which it is requir'd to be comply'd with, I never yet acknowledg'd. However, that in a *small and lawful instance it may be lawful for a Man to yield up his Liberty to the considerations of Peace and Unity*, is not deny'd : But that reaches not the present case, where the *instances* are not *small* ; and where things are so *Circumstantiated*, as that the *Lawfulness* of the compliance requir'd is question'd, and the state of things is such, that if we by *constant Communion* own the Power of the *Imposers*, we put our selves into their Hands, and lie at their Mercy, who are so far from being dispos'd to allow us any thing of *Liberty*, that they are more likely to go on to farther *Exactions*.

Such a compliance as will justify their Power to impose, we cannot discern to be *lawful*, and therefore the doing it even in *consideration of Peace and Unity*, cannot, in our apprehension, be able to excuse it. We grant indeed there have
been

been some in the Church of *England*, that have been ready and willing to yield up some inconsiderable Points to gain our Conformity; But we cannot for their sakes as Mr. *Hoadly* moves, Communicate Constantly with the Church of *England*, because this seems to us to amount to an owning their imposing Power in things we take to be very Considerable: And yet it is not for the sake of the Rigorous imposers, as he oddly expresses it, that we separate, but for our own sakes, that we may secure that Liberty to which we apprehend we have an undoubted Right, and which they appear bent to deprive us off.

It was farther added, that as matters now stand, Constant Communion would seem to intimate as if Divine Worship were not acceptable without such Superadded formalities as are used in the Church of *England*. But this I am told is a loading the Cause with all the aggravating Circumstances I can think of, when I cannot but know them to be wholly imaginary, and without foundation; and cannot but be sensible that I am in this unjust to a Church, which hath declared in the most publick Manner, that these superadded Formalities are of such a Nature, that they may be alter'd and abolish'd upon Occasion, &c. For my part I would not willingly be unjust to a Particular Person, much less to a Church. I am indeed very sensible of her Publick Declaration of the alterableness of the Ceremonies. But when I find that not an Ace can be abated, not a trifle alter'd, after reiterated Complaints for so many scores of Years, back'd with such weighty and moving Reasons, I must confess I cannot lay that stress upon such a Declaration as Mr. *Hoadly* seems to desire I should. It seems to me to stand for a Cypher in the Church of *England*, and therefore I know not why I should otherwise esteem of it. What I here express is not an Aggravation; nor is the fear imaginary and

without foundation. The Contempt that is so commonly pour'd upon the way of Worship us'd among the *Dissenters*, compar'd with the way of the *Church of England*, by those who are the most zealous defenders of that Church, is a plain Evidence that there is good reason for the fear signify'd under this Head. What though Persons that *Constantly Communicate with the Church*, won't openly declare it as their *Opinion* that *divine Worship is not acceptable without their superadded Formalities*: Yet when we find so many of them in their Discourses and Writings so freely running down a way of Worship that is more Scriptural than their own, and which only differs from theirs in the *Formalities* they have *superadded*, and representing one as so despicable, while the other is so admirable; the one so Apostical, and the other so Novel; the one as so suitable, and the other so absurd, how much I'd fain know does this fall short of it? If after this, which has been the Common Language of Pulpit and Press, we should join Constantly with them without Amendments, it would look as if we came over to their way of Worship, as being convinc'd that we could not be so well accepted in our own. And tho' Mr. Hoadly declares it would intimate quite the *Contrary*, yet he cannot expect his bare Judgment should give us Satisfaction. He backs it therefore with Arguments such as they are. He tells us that we have *superadded Formalities in our own Religious Assemblies*. And that if the *Constant Use of them, does not seem to intimate as if Divine Worship were not acceptable without them, no more doth Constant Communion with the Church of England. But if it does; then Constant Communion is not in our Opinion unlawful upon this Account. And that at least our Constant Communion with the Church of England is as Lawful as our Constant Communion with our own Churches, as far as this Argument is*

concern'd. But he might have observ'd had he thought Good, that those things which he calls *superadded Formalities in our Religious Assemblies*, are no Additions to Divine Institutions no Terms of Communion, but only Circumstances which though left indifferent by our Saviour, yet must be determin'd one way other by each Worshipping Assembly, according to the conveniency or inclination of those of whom it is made up. The stated Use of such things cannot so much as *seem to intimate as if Divine Worship were not acceptable without them*, because we lay no stress as to the acceptableness of Worship upon them; we openly declare that others may be acceptable to God without them, or who vary from us in them; and we manifest that we are in earnest in this Declaration, by our joyning Occasionally either with such Dissenting Congregations or Parish Churches, as therein most differ from us. The same cannot be said as to *Constant Communion with the Church of England*, which is entirely confin'd to societys worshipping in such a particular way; the *superadded Formalities* of that Church are Additions to Christ's Institutions, Terms of Communion, needless Ceremonies; and the confining our selves to them while such a stress is laid upon them, and they are so applauded, And that Worship that is without them is so contemn'd, would really look as if we thought divine Worship not acceptable without them. This makes a mighty difference. But he adds, that *our Constant Use of any particular superadded Formality in our own Churches seems much more strongly to intimate as if Divine Worship were not acceptable without it, than such Constant Use of any, in the Church Establish'd can do*. For, says he, *what you Use in your Churches, you pretend you Use upon Choice; which implies that you imagine it to add something to the acceptableness of the Worship: Whereas no such thing can be fairly gather'd from your Constant Use of a superadded For-*

Formality in the Church of England; because no one can possibly tell, whether you Constantly Use it because you think it most Conducing to the Decency and acceptableness of Publick Worship, or because it is enjoyned by Authority &c. I reply; that those Circumstances of Worship which each Congregation among us determines for it self, are indeed the matter of our *Choice*, but don't imply, that we *imagine they add any thing to the acceptableness of the Worship.* It is our known Principle, that nothing which God has not requir'd can contribute to the acceptableness of Worship to him. Such things as these therefore may make the Worship more Convenient for us, but not a jot the more acceptable to God. The super added Formalities of the *Church of England* have another Aspect: They are Additions to Divine Institutions and Terms of Communion. He that constantly joyns in them must do it out of *Choice*, when he may have a way of Worship that is free from them. Supposing he does it *because of the Authority that enjoyns them*, when that Authority has injoyn'd them for the sake of *Decency*, I think we may well suppose he has a regard to that also. And supposing he does not apprehend, that the Worship injoyn'd was more Decent, and more agreeable to God than the other that he might have opportunity for, I can't see why he should so prefer it, as entirely to confine himself to it. But be it as it will as to that, the Circumstances that are Determin'd in our Assemblies being only for Conveniency, while those in the *Church of England*, are design'd for *Ornament*, and the *heightning of Devotion*; and they being much more absolutely confin'd than we, I think there's no room for a Comparison in the Case; and that 'tis utterly groundless to insinuate as if our Circumstances and their Ceremonies, were equally li-
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able to affect the Parties concern'd, as to the unacceptableness of the Mode of Worship, that is opposite to that to which they are Us'd respectively. I don't here fly to a far fetcht *interpretation*. But give the Real state of the Case. When the things requir'd in the Publick Churches and in our separate Assemblies are of the same nature, and the Confinement the same, then will the case in this respect be the same; but not till then. I shall only add, That whereas he intimates, that *our Separation, as it is accompany'd with Occasional Communion, seeming to intimate, as if divine Worship were not acceptable with the constant use of such superadded Formalities as are enjoin'd in the Church of England, becomes thereby as unlawful, as the Circumstance mention'd, if true, would render our constant Communion with it, he entirely mistakes the case.* For our Occasional Communion with them, is a demonstration of our satisfaction, that they may be accepted of God with all their superadded Formalities; and we are incapable of doing any thing more than this amounts to in order to their Conviction; and when they give us a like demonstration, on the other hand, the case will be parallel, but not before.

It was also asserted, *That constant Communion would represent Christ's own Institution as defective, and not orderly or decent, without the Additions to divine Worship brought into the Church of England.* Whereupon he declares, *That Christ's own Institution of Baptism, or of the Lord's-Supper, or of publick and united Prayer, is as perfect as he design'd it to be, and no perfecter.* Agreed. But then (says he) *That you do not think your selves, that he design'd it to exclude Additions, and the constant use of Additions in any acts of religious Worship, your own Practice is a clear demonstration.* We deny it. We neither add any thing to Christ's Institution
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in *Baptizing*, nor in *celebrating the Communion*, nor in *publick Prayer*. Let him prove we do, and we'll discard it. He says he'll *instance in the Communion*. I attend him, as open to Conviction, as he himself could desire. *Christ's Institution* (he says) of the *Eucharist*, was only, *Eat this Bread, and Drink this Wine in remembrance of me*; not in this particular Posture, any more than at this particular Time; the *Gesture* being no more a part of the *Institution*, than the *Time*. I grant it; and am free to whatever truly follows from it. *Your constant use* then (says he) of any Posture, whether it be *Standing* or *Sitting*, is as much a reflection upon the *Defectiveness* of *Christ's Institution*, as your constant use of *Kneeling* could be. Which would be true, if either *Standing* or *Sitting* were made a Term of *Communion*, as *Kneeling* is; but till then the *Consequence* won't hold. For as long as *Persons* are left at liberty to use their own Posture, their constant using one Posture is no reflection upon *Christ's Institution*; it is but a taking that liberty which he has left them. We don't say, 'tis *unlawful* to use *Kneeling* constantly, if *Persons* really choose it: But when it is not chosen, for *Persons* to comply constantly with those that tell them they shan't receive without it, is a joining in with them, who by a plain Addition to *Christ's Institution*, reflect on it as defective: Which is what we cannot be charg'd with, who leave *Persons* at their liberty. Tho', at the same time, I must add, That in my Judgment I agree with those, who apprehend a *Table Posture*, which was used by our *Lord* himself, and his *Apostles*, to be most proper for a *Festival Ordinance*.

But to have such a Man as *Mr. Hoadly* declaring, that every *Prayer* we use at the *Solemnity* of the *Eucharist*, is a reflection on our *Lord's Institution*;

tion ; and that it is the same as to every Prayer we used at the Baptism of a Child, would be a surprizing thing, if I had not been used to such things in this Controversie. But for my part, I would never desire to have any Man I am arguing with, driven to a greater Extremity. But how can there be a *Reflection* or an *Addition* in serious Prayers in either of the Sacraments, when our Lord has bid us *Pray always*, and the nature of each Institution necessarily implies and requires Prayer. Let him prove the same as to *Kneeling*, and *Crossing*, and *Godfathers*, which are the Additions of their Church, and I'll give up the Cause.

But he seems to recover himself by the next Page, and to intimate he was only arguing *ad hominem*, as we say, (tho' I must needs say, if it was so, I think his Method was very improper, and his *Medium* unsuitable) when he adds, *The truth of the matter is this ; neither your Practice,* p. 199. *nor the Practice of the Church of England, doth represent the Institution of our Lord any more defective than he design'd it.* For your concession, that our *Practice* does not, I thank you, and am sorry that I can't make a like concession on your side also ; which the refusal of your Church to admit Persons, but upon such Terms as Christ has no were warranted you to insist on, will not allow me. But when you say, *That our Lord only design'd to ordain, that there should be publick Assemblies of Christians, and that the Holy Communion should be celebrated in those Assemblies,* I cannot entirely agree. For I think he not only ordain'd that the Holy Communion should be celebrated in those *Assemblies*, but that it should be celebrated with such Prayers and Praises, as suited such a Solemnity ; and were agreeable to the Sacrifice to be commemorated, and depended on, by all Communicants.

municants. You add, *All the Circumstances of these Assemblies, it is plain, be left to be determin'd by the Governors of his Church and People, according to the notions of Decency, and the various Customs of different Nations.* If you please, Sir, to consult the Introduction to my Second Part, you'll see my sense of this matter sufficiently. In short then, *constant Communion with the Church of England yielded to by us, would, as far as we can judge, represent the Institution of Christ as defective, not only in such Circumstances as be purposely neglected to determine, and left to be determin'd by future Governors, but also in such Circumstances as he warranted no Mortals to determine. And such a Representation we esteem unlawful.* And when you turn the other way, and would have our Occasional Communion with your Church, pass for as real a Representation of this nature, as our Constant Communion would do, *only with this difference, that the one represents it so less frequently than the other, you shew your Good-will indeed, but leave us as you found us.* For till you prove the contrary, we cannot help thinking, that our Occasional Communion with you may be expressive of Charity, tho' join'd with a declar'd disapprobation of your Additions; while a constant joining with you would be an approbation of them; and so carry in it such a Reflection on Christ's Institution, as they cannot be chargeable with, who tho' they now and then are with you, yet ordinarily keep up that, and other Institutions of his, as he has left them.

The last thing suggested under this Head, was, that our *constant Communion with the establish'd Church, in its present state, would be a confining our Charity to a Party, and a practical disowning and condemning all other Worshipping Assemblies* Which was declar'd to be a Consideration of great weight,

weight, in that constant Communion with the establish'd Church, is by its greatest Advocates intended to be exclusive of Communion with all others.

And here Mr. *Hoadly* defies me, to name any p. 201.
one single instance of Christian Charity, due by the Laws of the Gospel, to any Person, of what denomination soever, which a Man that lives in constant Communion with the Church of England cannot perform as well as any of us. If it will be any satisfaction to him; I'll name him not a *single*, but a comprehensive *Instance*. That Man that confines himself solely to the Church of *England*, which, make the best of it, is but a Party of Christians in this Land, and unchurches all other Christian Assemblies, as the Church herself has done by her Canons; this Man cannot do what he in Duty ought, towards the upholding *the Communion of Saints*. This, with me, is no small Fault; for I cannot but vehemently declare against the being acted by the Spirit of a Party, on the one side or other: Tho' I know very well, that our Brethren of the establish'd Church having got the upper Hand, are apt to look upon those only as acted by the Spirit of a Party, who question their Authority, and do not absolutely obey them; by which they sufficiently discover their Partiality. But you say, *the neglect of constant Communion has been the destruction of Christian Charity in the Land, and the encouragement to all Uncharitableness.* I have oft heard this asserted by those of your Church, but could never meet with proof of it. A true History of the Church since the Reformation, would plainly prove the contrary. The little real need of such Impositions, which have all along been the matter of Complaint; the care taken, in the Settlement of the Constitution, to entice and gratifie the Romanists, while so little has

has been done then, or since, to satisfy the Scruples of Fellow Protestants; the great Rigor and Severity that has been used, by Men in repute for Piety, towards their Brethren, about things, that the best that could be said of them by their Admirers was, that they were *indifferent*, tho' they could not discern they were so; the strange backwardness to amend even such things as are own'd to be amiss, lest it should be evident the Church was capable of being in some things in the wrong: These Observations, with many others that might be added, make it too evident, where the Guilt lies, and who are the injur'd Persons. But it should seem such things as these *weigh nothing with you on one side, whilst the lightest Feathers weigh down the Scale on the other.*

But let us a little consider that Article of the Creed, *the Communion of Saints.* I must confess, I can't affirm, that *any Persons have said till now,* (nor do I know that it is now said) *that the joining in the external acts of Communion, is a necessary part of Christian Charity, due to all Parties of Christians:* And yet it has been often said, and that by the most eminent Christian Writers, That there ought to be a mutual Intercourse, Fellowship and Communion between the several respective Churches and Congregations of Believers, whereby they declare unto the whole World, that altho' both Necessity and Conveniency oblige them to Assemble in distinct Places, and compose different Societies, that yet nevertheless they are all Members of one and the same Body, of which Christ is the Head; that they are all guided by the same Spirit, communicate in the same Institutions, and are govern'd by the same general Rules. And if (as an Ingenious modern Writer apprehends) the Addition of this Clause in the Creed, of *the Communion of Saints,* was occasion'd

See the
Critical
History of
the Apostles
Creed.

occasion'd by the *Donatists*, it will plainly follow, that all who confine the Church to their Party, and cut themselves off from the Society and Union of other Churches, that are as acceptable to God as themselves; all that are so wedded to their own Ways, or little narrow Principles and Notions, as to deny a Brotherly Affection to those who do not therein agree with them; and question the Validity of their Ordinances and Administrations, because their distinguishing Particularities are wanting; all of this stamp break in upon the *Communion of Saints*, and that way incur a Guilt that is not small.

In one sense there is to be a *Communion* between all the *Saints* on Earth, tho' in another sense it cannot be. There is to be a communication of Brotherly Affection, Respect and Concern, between them all the World over, tho' they cannot all have actual *external Communion* with each other: And this Brotherly Affection, Respect and Concern, ought to be such as would influence to an *external Communion*, when a fitting opportunity offers for it. But as for what Mr. *Hoadly* has suggested upon this Head, 'tis little to the purpose. If (says he) the confining of *external Communion* to a Party, be confining our Charity to a Party; then the confining of *external Communion* to one Parish, is a confining our Charity to this particular Parish. No such matter. For tho' you of the Church of *England* ordinarily confine your external Communion to your Parish Churches, yet it's plain you don't confine your Charity to that particular Parish you live in, in that you are ready to Communicate in other Parishes, when you are from home; and upon all occasions own, that they are as true Churches as your own. Whereas, on the other hand, confining your external Communion to those of your

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own Party and Way, so as neither upon any occasion to Communicate with your Fellow Christians that differ from you, with whom you easily might Communicate; nor to be free to own them true Churches, if they are not under the Conduct of your Hierarchy, and suited to your Model and Measures, you plainly confine your Charity to a Party; and have not that Brotherly Affection, Respect and Concern, for those who are as acceptable to God as your selves, that you ought to have. In the mean time, to plead that it is your *Duty*, to give all the Encouragement you can to Peace, and Order, and Unity, and all the Credit you can to an Establishment you judge good, seems to look as if you thought you could make God a Compensation for the defectiveness of your Charity, by the abounding of your Zeal: But you must give me leave to say, 'tis not a Zeal according to knowledge. And to insinuate, as if the representing it your Duty, to have a Brotherly Affection, Respect and Concern for Dissenters, and own their Societies for true Churches, were the making it your Duty to give Encouragement and Credit to Separations, tho' never so unreasonable, and to all the Consequences of them, is not Argument, but Aggravation.

At length what was asserted under this last Suggestion is own'd, viz. that a Constant Communion with the Church of England, is a practical disowning and condemning all separate worshipping Assemblies: But then it is palliated, by this Addition, That it is but a practical Declaration that they judge constant Communion with the Church of England to be lawful, and preferable to a Separation. As to that, they are free to judge as they please. But that more is imply'd, is plain from the Constitution they put themselves under, which by its *Canons* threatens all their constant Communicants with

with Excommunication, if they own the Churches of any Dissenters from them to be true Churches; which is so far from *being consistent to a tittle, with the Law of God, and the Charity of a Christian,* that it overthrows *the Communion of Saints.* And tho' he adds again, *That we would constantly have communicated with the Church of England our selves, and would do still, upon some Alterations;* yet he again mistakes, in supposing that such Alterations as might make it appear to us to be our Duty to Communicate ordinarily in the Parish Churches, would prevail with us to join so constantly with them, as to deny any proper Expression of a Brotherly Affection, Respect and Concern, to any Party of serious Christians among us, that have *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, &c.* and we could not esteem this *lawful then,* any more than now. Neither do we this way condemn our Brethren, who never Communicate occasionally with the Church of England. We are for following the Rule of the Apostle, *Let every Man be fully persuaded in his own Mind.* Tho' they are not able to go so far as we think we may do very warrantably, yet we Censure them not, if they maintain a Brotherly Affection towards those from whom they separate.

If indeed they unchurch all our Parish Churches, and separate from them as Antichristian, and refuse to own the sober Members of the establish'd Church as Fellow Christians, we think our selves so far, and upon that account, oblig'd to condemn them: But we cannot by any means condemn them for not *Communicating Occasionally* with them, while they are not convinc'd it would be lawful for them so to do; and while, in the mean time, they have a Brotherly Respect for them, as Members of the same Head. Without doubt there are some Separatists among the Dis-

senters, that do as much *confine their Charity to a Party*, as any do in the Church of *England*; and we think both are equally to be condemn'd for their want of *Charity*. But then, as we don't condemn those in the Church of *England*, who own ours to be true Churches, and respect us as Brethren, because they don't sometimes Communicate with us; so neither do we condemn those among the Dissenters, who are alike affected to those of the Church of *England*, because they don't sometimes Communicate with the Members of it. On each side there may be such Circumstances, as may make the forbearance of actual external Communion advisable. In this I hope I *speak out*, which Mr. *Hoadly* moves for. And I'm sure I speak not my own sense only, but that of many of my Brethren. And yet with this it is very consistent, to hold, that such a *constant Communicating with any Church*, as is attended with an unchurching other Christian Societies that are united to Christ the Head, would be a *confining our Charity to a Party*, which is flatly *unlawful*.

But here the Gentleman is pleas'd to digress, to mind me of a *circumstance of our Occasional Communion*, which, he thinks, according to our way of arguing against constant Communion, must render that *Occasional Communion unlawful*. 'Tis this: He says, *Occasional Communion intimates as if Constant Communion were lawful, and therefore necessary, which is contrary to our inward sense*. But he must allow me to tell him, that this Intimation is so far from being *certain*, that 'tis meerly *imaginary*; so far from being *acknowledg'd on all hands*, as he affirms, that we have disown'd it upon all occasions.

If when Mr. Hoadly reads our Reasonings against Constant Communion, he fancies that according to us, Occasional Communion must be unlawful; 'tis only because, as was hinted in my Tenth Chapter, he takes things in gross, and so looks upon the Action of Communicating as the same thing done now and then, or for a constancy; without due attending to those Circumstances that make it widely different.

And if when he reads our Defences of our Occasional Conformity, he fancies it is so necessary to the demonstration of our Charity to the establish'd Church, that it is our indispensable Duty, he runs into a Mistake, in supposing a particular Expression of Charity to be as necessary, as is the Charity to be in such a way express'd.

However, let him be affected as he pleases in reading our Vindication and Defence on one Head or another, our Occasional Communion cannot intimate what we publicly disown, and upon all occasions declare against; and none can put that sense upon it, but such as are dispos'd to misinterpret our Actions. His Argument then that is bottom'd upon this Supposition, That our Occasional Communion with the Church, intimates the lawfulness of Constant Communion with it, is meer trifling.

But he tells us, *our Occasional Communion is no better a demonstration of our Charity to the Church of England, than a Declaration spoken or written upon Paper, that we hold the Worship of it to be tolerable.* If this be true, I hope those of us who are known to be clear in our Judgment for the lawfulness of Occasional Communion, shall be no more upbraided for our not practising it. He adds, *Nor bath it any better influence upon the publick face of Affairs, than such a Verbal Declaration would have.* Which, if true, as far as I can judge,

is owing to the preposterous Zeal of some of our Brethren, to force those who can Communicate *Occasionally*, to do it *Constantly*, upon pain of being depriv'd of the Rights of *Englishmen*.

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He has yet *one Argument* more to prove that the *Circumstances* mention'd, supposing them to attend upon *Constant Communion*, do not make it unlawful; and that taken from our own concession, that *constant Communion* was lawful, before we came to imagine that there were no hopes of *Amendments*, and that the *waiting time* was over. But it unhappily falls out that I can find no such *concession* in the place he

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refers to. Speaking of the *Moderate Dissenters*, I do indeed say, * *They are free to acknowledge, that to an offending Brother gentler methods and time is due; and much more to a Church that needs Reformation: But the waiting time seems to be now over, when the practice of such things as needed Reformation is heighten'd into declar'd purposes of perpetual Adherence.* But not a word of the *lawfulness of constant Communion* before this time came. Is this a fair way of quoting? Does such a Method become an angry *Admonisher*? This is *putting a colour upon your Cause* with a witness, to argue from a concession never made.

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Upon the whole; Let what Mr. *Hoadly* has said upon this Head, appear to him ever so *evident and demonstrative*, it does not follow it must be so to us: If he has a *more than usual confidence in this point*, I only pity him, that he should have no more to support it. If he can't help taking it for granted, that we our selves are by this time *convinc'd, that this part of our Cause hath been very much mistaken*; I can't help telling him, that he triumph'd before a *Victory*. Upon his desire, I have review'd with all the *Calmness possible*, what has been said upon this Head; and am so far from
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being satisfy'd, that we are oblig'd in Conscience to Communicate constantly in the Church of England, that I am the more confirm'd in my present Practice, by finding that one who is so free in censuring and condemning it, has so little solid Reason to alledge against it. As for what he adds,

Secondly, viz. That supposing some inconvenient Circumstances do attend upon constant Communion, besides such like Circumstances, much worse do unavoidably attend upon a Separation, and make it much more unlawful, and much less eligible; I can only say, That this Consideration has so oft been stated and obviated, that 'tis needless to stay upon it now. The Consequences of the Separation, be they never so wretched and miserable, are chargeable on them that cause the Separation by their Impositions; in the same manner as he that by main force shuts and keeps me out of Doors, is the cause of all the Mischief that arises thence. Neither are they so unavoidable as he represents them.

'Tis not impossible out of a sense of Duty, to love a Man that is so govern'd by *Passion* as to shut me out of Doors, when I have as good a right to be within as himself; and so *ignorant* to think he does well in doing so: Or if I should find it difficult to love such a Man, who not only keeps me out, but gives me hard Names at the same time, for not being all the while in the same House with him; I think I should find it much more difficult, to come in wholly upon his Terms, suit my self to his Humour, and converse with no one but him whom I found so ready to impose upon me.

And to tell me, that this would be the way to *Peace*, and that the Consequences of staying out, make it much more unlawful, and much less

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eligible, than so far to comply, would seem rather Banter than Argument. *Our intestine Dissentions and Quarrels, our Hatreds and Animosities, have indeed ow'd their Violence and their Edge to our Religious Differences;* and the Patrons of the Imposing Power have all along been told it would be so, but to little purpose. The *Puritans* and their Descendants, in the mean time, have been fearful of running into the opposite Extream; and therefore have earnestly warn'd against an Uncharitable and a *Donatistical* Separation; and Mr. *Baxter*, who is particularly referr'd to, has herein been as zealous as any Man. But that our charitable Separation is therefore ever the less warrantable, I must confess, I cannot see. You may *intreat* as you please therefore; as long as what has been suggested satisfies us, that our Separation is justifiable, while your Impositions remain, we shall continue it; and yet shall be so charitable to you, as to believe, if you are serious in that way of Worship which is to us less eligible, you are as really accepted of God as our selves; which is what I suppose you mean, when you say, *we acknowledge the things requir'd to be materially lawful.* Neither does it follow, *that if such Circumstances as those mention'd, belong to constant Communion with your Church, they belong to constant Communion with all other Churches;* for let a Church be free from rigorous Impositions, and no such Circumstances can ever be pretended. Let but such a Church ever be, (and we hope such a thing is not impossible) and it cannot with any shadow of Reason be said, that such a Separation will be *ever necessary.*

For my part, I can freely declare, I have *Reflected* on the *Circumstances* and *Consequences* both ways, and yet cannot yield to *constant Communion with the establish'd Church,* and I doubt never shall. And yet,

yet, if I may do it without offence to Mr. *Hoadly*, tho' I am not very fond of *proclaiming* things to *the World* any more than is necessary, I think it may not be amiss, as opportunity offers, to signify how ready we are stately to worship God with those who have driven us from them, whenever they are pleas'd to drop their Impositions: And we can safely *appeal to all Mankind*, who are most *zealous for Peace and Unity*, they that might heal the Breach, by leaving things in their proper indifferency, but won't; or we that are ready to do all that we *lawfully and with a safe Conscience* may do, in order to a Coalition. Mr. *Hoadly* indeed tells us the contrary *stands upon Record against us*: But the Recorder is mistaken, and manifests his Prejudice more than his Fidelity; and so he does in what follows; it being natural for one Mistake to lead into another. For we *contradict* neither the *Principles* nor *Practice of our Predecessors*, as far as we can discern they had Reason to support them; nor do we *condemn our selves*; tho' the Gentleman is wonderful willing it should be thought we did do so. We *charge* not our *Brethren and People*, provided they cherish a charitable Temper, which we are sure is their Duty: We *prejudice no Churches*, but are free to yield them the undisturbed possession of whatever Rights Christ has given them: We put no *Bar to Unity*, nor give any *Encouragement to Discord*; we leave that to our Brethren, who might easily unite us, and put an end to Discord, if they were but willing: And finally, We encourage no *groundless Separations*; we are for none but such as are justifiable and well grounded. Tho' a thousand such unprov'd Charges were *Recorded* against us, we are not mov'd, unless in a way of pity towards those who so much injure them.

themselves, as to take a liberty to *Record* themselves false Accusers of their Brethren.

For a conclusion then, in the third place, a comparison is industriously pursu'd between *those who blameably impose Terms of Communion, and still adhere to the Imposition of them, and those who are said to acknowledge the things impos'd to be in themselves lawful, and yet love not Peace and Unity so well as to submit to them.* This comparison I have heard represented as a Master-piece, and therefore I must not pass it by. Let us see how it runs.

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As on the one side (says he) they prefer the Injunction of some things of less moment, before Concord; so on the other side, you prefer opposition to the Injunction of what is not sinful, before Concord. Admirably stated, I profess! But alas, 'tis not only *some things of less moment, the Injunction of which they prefer before Concord;* but they enjoin several things they have no authority to prescribe, to the subverting of *Concord;* while we, on the other hand, not out of *opposition* to them, but to secure the Peace of our own Consciences, refuse to comply with things we can't see we could lawfully comply with, in the manner they require we should; and to require or yield to what may be call'd *Concord* upon their terms, is, in our apprehension, flatly sinful.

He goes on: *As they refuse to lay aside what they acknowledge to be in it self unnecessary, for the sake of a closer Union amongst Protestants; so you refuse to comply with what you acknowledge to be in it self lawful, for the sake of the so much desir'd Union.* But alas, Sir, there's a wide difference between the two cases. They lawfully may lay aside their unnecessary things, for the sake of a closer Union amongst Protestants; nay 'tis their plain Duty: But we cannot lawfully comply with these unnecessary things, in the manner they require we should; it would

would do violence to our Consciences, for the Reasons before alledg'd; and therefore it would be directly sinful. We are for enquiring, whether the thing be not only *lawful in it self*, but in its *Circumstances* too; and we think it the part of wise and conscientious Men to be ever careful upon that Head.

Again, *As they (says he) bear their Testimony against all Disorder and unnecessary Separation, by adhering to their Impositions at the expence of Love and Peace; so you bear your Testimony against all unnecessary Impositions, by forming a Separation, at the expence of the same precious and invaluable Goods.* That our High-Church-Men adhere to their *Impositions, at the expence of Love and Peace*, is too evident to be gain-said: I think therefore they rather *bear Testimony* to the dangerous tendency of an imposing Spirit, than to any thing else. But that we *form a Separation at the expence of Love and Peace*, is a groundless Charge; since we have a plain force put upon us; are, while under that force, careful to maintain *Love*; and still ready to go as far as we lawfully may go, in order to *Peace*. I could easily draw a much more natural Comparison, between Men of Mr. *Hoadly's* Principles and the *Cassandrian Papists*, but that it would look invidiously.

But he still advances. *They (says he) will not p. 216. unite with you, unless you will come up to them; and you will not unite with them, unless they will come down to you.* This is all Artificial Colour. Be it *up* or *down*, we are ready to unite with them upon Scripture Terms, while they won't unite with us but upon their own Terms. We desire but the liberty which Christ hath left us; whereas they'll have nothing to do with us, unless we'll let them impose upon us. We cannot see that this is equal. *They (says he) acknowledge it ma-*
terially

materially lawful to yield to you; and you acknowledge it materially lawful to comply with them. This then is the professed Principle both of them and you, that it is not reasonable to do a thing materially lawful for the sake of publick Concord and Unity. And, if there be any guilt in this Principle, you must both equally share in it.

Let us a little scan this. *They acknowledge it materially Lawful to yield to us. How? I suppose by not imposing on us. This is materially Lawful; e. they should not sin in doing so. Very well! We, he says, acknowledge it materially Lawful to comply with them. How? Does he mean by Constant Communion with them, and yielding to all their impositions? When or where did we acknowledge this? I may well enquire, because I know nothing of it. I on the contrary assert such a Compliance would be really unlawful. And therefore we don't agree in our Principle. Their Principle is this, that Any thing not forbidden in the Word of God, may Lawfully be injoin'd and Practis'd in his Worship. Our Principle on the Contrary is this; that no Terms of Church Union and Communion are Lawful, but such as the Word of God will warrant. Are not these very Different? The dropping the things in debate is very Consistent with their Principle. Because though it were suppos'd, that such things might Lawfully be enjoin'd and Practis'd in God's Worship, yet the imposing of such things as are scrupled, may very lawfully be wav'd. But our yielding to them would destroy our Principle, till we are convinc'd their Terms of Union and Communion are such as the Word of God will warrant, which we are satisfy'd they are not. And while this is over-look'd, to harp so much upon *material Lawfulness*, is only a taking shelter in obscurity. What does he mean by *materially Lawful?**

Lawful? Does he know any thing in the case *materially unlawful?* Is any Action, relating to Worship, so unlawful in it self, as that no Circumstances, as to Agents, Objects, Manner, Ends, &c. shall make it Lawful? I profess I know none such. Till he can assign some such Action, he is wholly in the dark, while he talks so much of *materially Lawful*. His arguing upon it is meer confusion. He talks of *giving up of Principles*; for our part, we'll give up our Principle as soon as we are convinc'd. But he that would convince us, must not lay all his stress upon *material Lawfulness*, till he proves that a sufficient Mark of Distinction to give Light. A thing may be *materially Lawful*, and yet grossly Sinful. How then will this help us to judge? That is a *Principle* from which we cannot *recede*; nor, I suppose, can Mr. *Hoadly* deny it.

He might therefore very safely have dropp'd his Harangue; but then perhaps his Discourse had lost its Beauty. However, I can freely assure him, we don't *guide our Practice by a Principle we hate and condemn in others*. For as far as Peace is concern'd, the Principle we guide our Practice by, is this; that we do all that we Lawfully may do in order to it. Could we find constant Conformity Lawful for us we would soon yield to it. Would our Brethren of the *Church of England* Act upon the same Principle, the impositions would be dropp'd, our Complaints would be at an end, and Peace would be the Consequence. Consider therefore I pray you, for it much concerns you) *what a wretched Estate a Church or Nation are come to, when they that hate the peace and Prosperity of them, will compass Sea and Land, and do all unlawful things to disturb and ruin them; and they that pretend most to Love and desire their peace and prosperity, will not do all Lawful things*

to

to purchase them, or Sacrifice the least part of their own Scheme to them. You ask me what is *Christian Moderation*? I answer then do we deal *moderately* when we treat our neighbours not rigorously, but mildly and humanely, accommodating our selves to their Circumstances and Capacity, rather yielding (as far as we may do it Lawfully) than insisting on the extremity of our Right. This is what we are free to. We are dispos'd to yield up matters of lesser Consideration, to the great Concerns of Love and Unity: But we think the owning an imposing Power, which we cannot find our Lord ever gave, is a greater Consideration than we can lawfully yield in, till our judgments are satisfy'd. We are for *Moderation*, not only word but thing. It extremely troubles us, it should ever be ridicul'd and expos'd. We desire not to amuse the World, and make People think we are the only Moderate Persons; we are very willing Mr. Hoadly, and others of his stamp, should have the Reputation of Moderate Persons too, and hope they will more and more deserve it. But then we beg leave that we may be allowed therein to bear them company; and I'm sure we can heartily joyn in with him in Crying out, *what a melancholy Prospect must it afford us, to see the faint dispositions there are, on all sides, to this Christian Grace; when we consider that nothing but this can restore Unity and Happiness to a Divided Church and Nation?*

p. 219.
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But why should it be intimated as if the most rigorous imposers in the Church, had as much reason to refuse to part with their impositions, as we to comply with them? How can this be, upon the supposition mention'd before, that the imposition of their Terms is blameable? If the impositions are blameable then is the refusal to part with them blameable also. This one thing would answer all the Pleas you have here drawn up for them.

p. 215

Should

Should they say, that their dropping the impositions would represent the Church of England, as wanting Reformation; would betray the Authority of Governors; intimate as if Divine Worship were not as acceptable with such impositions, as without them; and be a disowning and condemning the Church of England as it was Before; this one answer suffices for all. For if the *Imposition of their Terms is blameable*, then ought they to part with them, even tho' such Consequences would follow. How then can he say, that our *Constant Communion with them, is as Lawful, as their Compliance with us can be; or that their Compliance with us is as Unlawful, as our Constant Communion with them?* When their compliance with us, is only a removal of those Impositions for which they are blameable; while our *Constant Communion with them*, would not only be a going contrary to the mind and will of God, according to our best understanding, but a joining in with them to take part in the blame. Upon this supposition, their Compliance with us cannot be *unlawful*, unless it be unlawful to retract a fault; nor our compliance with them *Lawful*, unless it be so, to sin for Company. But as for the *Doctrine of Circumstances*, which Mr. Hoadly is so much against, I think it not only necessary to be apply'd to the *Practise* here under Consideration, but to all other Practises, by such as would justly Determine of Sin and Duty: Neither is it the the *Doctrine of Circumstances* that perplexes and obscures, but it is the bare considering things as to the matter of them, without attending to the Circumstances that render them either lawful or unlawful, that has created all that perplexity and obscurity, that is so observable in this Gentleman's whole discourse about the matter, from beginning to the end.

After all, *He asks us what we are willing to do?* p. 232.

I answer him again, all that we can be satisfy'd we lawfully may do, in order to Peace and Union: And if this will not give Content, we cannot help it. We have no *Scheme* that we desire to be granted, either in whole or in Part. Let us but have (as has been often hinted) Unity in things necessary, Liberty in things indifferent, and Charity in all, and we desire no more. Let the same things be repeated a hundred times over, we can see no real inclination to Peace and Unity, in those that would grudge us this. Neither can we leave off *Lamenting our Breaches*, which are attended with such Consequences; nor *complaining against those, who will not heal them*, though they easily might, by Leaving us but in the Possession, of that, of which our Lord has given them no right to deprive us. You farther Ask what our Experience has taught us. I answer, we must be very blockish, if it have not taught us this, that we are not like in haste to grow more conformable to Scripture, if we wait till your Church sets us the Pattern. For this Reason in stead of being induc'd to a falling entirely in with you, we think our selves the more oblig'd to study a Conformity to the Scripture Rule, in our Separate Assemblies, and are the more convinc'd that those who tempt us to a Compliance with your Church in your present State under pretence of *Peace and Unity*, do but Cover under a friendly Vail, a design to Rob us of our Purity, or hinder us in tending towards it.

In the close he tells me, I must give him leave to think, that he has advanc'd something in all that he has said, that may make us a little doubtful of the Excellence of our Cause. I can't help what he is pleas'd to think, but I must assure him, I can't encourage any such Thoughts, because I see no foundation for them. Nothing he has suggested makes it appear to me a doubtful point, whether

p. 231,

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I ought to choose Conformity, or Nonconformity. I have chosen the latter deliberately, upon Grounds that I think I can answer for, to God my own Conscience, and all the World; but as for the *finding out Evasions and Arts for the keeping on foot our unhappyy Divisions*, I leave that to those that are afraid lest Men should have such a taste of the sweet of Liberty, as should make them impatient of those Confinements which have unhappily Divided us; and from which we hope the time will come when we may be as happily freed.

A Letter to Mr. Ollyffe.

S I R,

IN your first *Defence*, you tell me, *That the p. 112*
Matters we differ in are of small consequence in comparison of the things wherein we are agreed; and That even in those things wherein we differ, it proceeds from different Apprehensions and Notions, which are as various as the Lineaments in Mens Faces, while yet we own the necessity of forbearing one another in love. For my part, I was ever of this mind; and therefore will no more quarrel with a Man because in such Matters as those in which you and I are not like to agree, he cannot think as I do, than because the Lineaments of his Face differ from mine. You close with an admirable Apostolical Rule; *Let us follow the things that make for Peace, and the things whereby we may edifie one another.*

While we both endeavour to follow this Rule, what room can there be for Heat? We may, I think, continue to differ, without that narrow
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selfish Spirit, or those *Jealousies* and *Suspicious*, or that *Passion* and *Revenge*, which you speak of in the Preface to your last *Defence*. We may still disagree in these lesser things, and yet in our differing Stations contribute (and that with a Brotherly Correspondence too) to the spreading of that *true Religion*, which lies in *Love to God* and *to our Neighbour*, which you there so much recommend.

I can heartily agree with you in that Preface, and could have transcrib'd it (a very few things only being alter'd) and prefix'd it to a distinct Reply to you, had I thought it would have given any light: But I can never apprehend that when there is a Debate on foot, any Service can be done by a set Discourse, which with a different turn is applicable to either side.

There is one thing which seems to me to run through both Parts of your Defence, which I can by no means understand; and that is, How a justification of those who differ from you in their apprehensions concerning the Terms of Conformity, must necessarily involve you under Condemnation. When *Mens Notions*, you know, are as various as the *Lineaments in their Faces*; I can't see why a Man may not prefer his own Notions, as well as his own Complexion, before yours, without condemning you. The Notions of our Minds are no more at our command, than the Features of our Faces. For what I can perceive, in the midst of all your Reflexions upon their Cause, you can no more help respecting really the ejected Ministers, whose Cause I am pleading, than any of us can: Yet should any of your Brethren in the Church of *England* (and some of them are inclinable enough) tell you, that hereby you condemn'd your selves, you'd think your selves injur'd. I could mention divers cases in
which

which of two Men that should offer, one would take one side, and another the opposite, and yet both be honest, and act upon Principles, according to the best of their light. Both can't indeed be in the right, and each Party thinking that he is right, cannot but think the other in the wrong; but why if I think my self in the right, and you in the wrong, I must take you for *a Man of no Conscience, or a very blind Guide of others*, I can't imagine. Pref. p. 9.

Some among the Nonconformists, as you your self observe, took the *Oxford-Oath* formerly, while others refus'd it. I don't doubt but many on each side acted with a clear Conscience. And in declaring my self on one side, I am far from reflecting on the Integrity of the other. I believe that some, even of those that refus'd to take the Oaths to King *William* and Queen *Mary*, might be better Men than some that took them. Great allowance in all such cases must be made for Circumstances. While one is apt to lay his greatest stress upon one thing, and another upon somewhat that is quite different, tho' the course taken in the issue be opposite, yet it does not follow but each may act in the integrity of his Heart.

I do indeed say, that the ejected Ministers *could not consent to, and could not practise such and such things*. They said the same over and over. Yet it does not follow that all who took different Measures from them, were *compell'd so to consent and practise*. For they might have connivance in some things, and take others in a softning sense; they might get into the Church by the help of some Distinctions, which their Dissenting Brethren were not free to make use of; and might so qualifie things, as not *so to consent and practise*, as the ejected Ministers thought they must have

p. 3.

done, had they come into the Constitution; and yet, after all, there may be more of *Simplicity and Godly Sincerity*, on the part of those who refus'd compliance, tho' they thereby expos'd themselves. While indeed they apprehended they were by the Constitution oblig'd to such a *consent* and *practice*, as their Conscience could not allow of, they were certainly oblig'd to keep off; and yet it does not follow but that the Conformity, which to them had been unwarrantable, might be yielded to by some others, with the help of some Distinctions, without doing real Violence to their Consciences. They might fall in with the Church, verily believing themselves not oblig'd to such a *consent* and *practice*, as the others declar'd against; and so be really Honest: But whether they were wise Men, and which side was in the right, cannot be duly judg'd without a mature and deliberate weighing of the Circumstances of the case.

pag. 4.

Mr. *Dorrington's* Carriage to us, and ours to you, is widely different; and it is not extremly kind in you, to represent them as alike ill natur'd and groundless. He says, the Sacraments are disparag'd among the Presbyterians, under the name of Ceremonies. In that case I tell him, he might as well have charg'd us with the blackest Crimes. But tho' we say Conformity to the Establishment would have done Violence to the Consciences of our Fathers, and would do the same in our case, we don't mean, much less declare, it must be the same as to you also: For we very well know, that Consciences are not all of a size, nor the way of Mens conceiving things, by which their Actions are influenc'd, the same. Could Mr. *Dorrington* have prov'd his Charge against us, I had not complain'd: But as for you, I bring no Charge against you, and therefore you
complain

complain without cause. To your own *Master* I can leave you to *stand or fall*, with your nice Distinctions, which yet I cannot approve of, till I better understand them. I grant indeed that the Sentiments of the Minds of Men, and the Dictates of their Consciences, will not alter the intrinsic nature of Good and Evil: But they'll intitle to a favourable allowance, when Men act according to their Integrity, even though there should be a Mistake at bottom.

That the old *Puritans* acted in the Integrity of their Hearts, I cannot doubt; nor can I allow my self so much as to question the same as to you and your Neighbours; tho' I think their Conformity and yours very different. Many of them were admitted without that Subscription, that there was nothing contrary to the Word of God in the Liturgy and Ceremonies, which you can upon no account be allow'd to wave; and a promise that they would not preach against such things as you have, by Subscription, testify'd your approbation of, was sufficient in their case. Many of them, it's true, did use the Ceremonies; others in the mean time refus'd, and yet were allow'd to officiate as Lecturers, where they were not oblig'd. Nothing of this nature can now be allow'd or conniv'd at. If it would, and you could but persuade those at Helm to make tryal, you'd soon see whether many among us that now Dissent would not Conform as far as they.

The Conforming *Puritants*, neither read the Scrupled Parts of the Liturgy, nor impos'd Kneeling: They neither insisted upon Godfathers and Godmothers, nor the sign of the Cross. If these are *Horrid things*, (which is your Language and not mine,) they kept free from them and had Connivance. Or if in any of these things some of them did fall in with the Stream, they

yet kept their Liberty in such things as they judg'd sinful; as to which there was much the same difference of Apprehension, among several Persons, then, as now. Such of them as did use Godfathers and Godmothers when the Parents desir'd them, yet could not by any means be prevail'd with, *to exclude Parents from their Right to Dedicate their Children to God*, when they declar'd themselves ready for it, and came with their Claim; as some of you, I doubt, are forc'd to do. They did not reckon those irregular, that withdrew their Children before the sign of the Cross was made. Some of them reckon'd the sign of the Cross, *a new Sacrament added to Christ's*; and therefore would not use it at all (nor will those in our times that have that Apprehension): But such of them as had the most favourable thoughts of it, and could use it where it was insisted on, yet durst not insist upon it, where those that were concern'd, desir'd to wave it. They did not declare those sav'd who dy'd impenitent: They alter'd the Office, where they apprehended that to be the Case. Nor did they pronounce the Greek Church damn'd, but wav'd the Damnatory Clauses. And herein they acted safely enough; being under no engagement to use all the Parts and Offices of the Liturgy without varying. Many of them, never swore at all to Obey their Ordinary; much less *to Obey Suspected Canons without reserve*; or *to Obey the Ecclesiastical Courts*. Had you Consider'd this, I hardly think you would have triumph'd so mightily in the mentioning their Case: And whether the overlooking such things as these be *fair and impartial*, I leave to your own second Thoughts. In your Case, indeed when your Obligations are so strait, I grant you may well eno' talk of *Christian Obedience*: But there was not the same Reason for it in their Case; who were not

not under such Confinements as you are: Nor shall I in our case, think our compliance with the Conformity requir'd, any part of *Christian Obedience*, till you prove that our Governors have a right to Impose, in those things in which they require our submission. I am not asham'd to own, and stand to it, that besides the *lawfulness* or *unlawfulness* of the things requir'd upon Conformity, I am for looking into the Commission of the Imposers, and seeing how far they are warranted by him from whom all Power in these things must proceed: And after all, should think it a shrewd Argument of my being free from an Obligation to yield to their Demands, if *I could not fall in with the prevailing sense of those who have had the care of the Constitution ever since its Settlement.* Your frequent arguing in so peculiar a manner, and yet at the same time I doubt not with so good a meaning, is to me an additional evidence to what you cite from Mr. Baxter, how possible p. 17, 18. it is for pious Persons to act sincerely, and yet have different Sentiments, and Practice differently. But methinks you should no more look upon your self as censur'd and condemn'd, by those who make it appear by what strength they have, that they upon grounds that are justifiable differ from you, than you would be willing to be reckon'd to censure and condemn them, by justifying your own Apprehension and Practice, in the things wherein you differ from them.

And if I have not *expos'd* you this way, by at- p. 18, 19. tempting to shew that the ejected Ministers, and ¶ they who succeed them, have reason to take things in a different sense from yours, much less am I chargable as blameably *exposing* you the other way, by taking notice of your differing from the Body of the Church you plead for. I must beg you to consider, that if yours was the prevailing

sense, there could be no possibility of my this way *exposing* you; and so long as *where the Constitution has left you liberty as to practice*, you, for any thing we have to say, may freely take it, (which is the sum of what you plead for) methinks tho' I fall in with those among your Brethren, (whom I take to be a considerable majority) who think the Constitution would not leave us that liberty under it, as Men of your Sentiments often take, you can have no great reason to complain. And if we may be allow'd to form a guess, from the late Representations of the Lower House of Convocation, had they but liberty to act according to their Judgments, you'd soon see whether by such a Defence of the Church as yours, you had not *expos'd* your self, rather than been *expos'd* by me or others.

However, if you please, you may be so candid as to believe, that in the mentioning this both before and now, I aim at stirring you up to be-think your self, what sort of Interest you are endeavouring to support, and who are like to be the gainers: At least I should think it would be as natural, and more like a Gentleman and a Christian too, than to represent it as either *disingenuous* or *malitious*, which are hard Words; Words that I have no inclination to return.

My aim in the short *History of High and Low Church*, which so much disturbs you, was expressly mention'd; and therefore not very *difficult* to be *understood*. It was to set before you the stream of the Proceedings about Ecclesiastical Affairs from the first; and convince you, that the sense given to things on our side, is the same in which they have been generally understood, by those to whom the care of the Constitution has been intrusted, and therefore not to be stiled, a set of *Extralegal and Particular Sentiments*. This I must confess

confess still appears to me much to the purpose.

As for you who take several things in a different sense from the generality of your Brethren, I dare not charge you with breaking your Subscriptions and Engagements; but you must give me leave to say, that your sense of them differs from that of your Brethren, who have all along been the prevailing Number, and are so at this Day.

What you quote out of Dr. *John Burges's*, makes rather for me than you. For you see from thence, that an honest Man may refuse Ceremonies, without holding them absolutely unlawful. But you may easily be suppos'd to overlook that, when you tell me so positively, that I give you *no instance of any one discountenanc'd for omitting any Ceremony or Imposition, in the manner and under the limitations express'd in your Defence.* Here you overlook with a witness. That which it seems hinder'd you from minding the suitableness of the Instances produc'd, was this; *That I bring in the most rigorous Bishops declaring that they punish'd none but for Contempt,* with which you intimate you are not chargeable. Very well! But I pray, Sir, what sort of Persons were they that the warm Archbishop *Whitgift* charg'd with *Contempt*? Were they not such as forbore the Cross and Godfathers in Baptism, and Kneeling at the Communion, and the like Ceremonies, when they thought they had a just occasion? And don't you do the same? And could your Method then have pass'd with him for agreeable to the form of Law prescrib'd? When your Course and Practice is the very same that has been charg'd as *Contempt* in others, by those who have been at Helm in the Church, why should it offend you that I take notice of it? Why should it be suppos'd *I design'd*

p. 22.

p. 23.

p. 24.

to put your Governors in mind to punish you, if you Baptiz'd without Godfathers, and the Cross and admitted Persons to the Communion without Kneeling? Alas, Sir, they know their Power well enough. It needs no great degree of your Charity to frame an Excuse, where there was no Guilt. My only intention was to convince you that your Scheme and Method cross'd the sense of those who have had the Ascendant; cross'd their avow'd declar'd publick Sense: But if the sense of such a Man as *Whitgift*, who was fix'd at Helm just after the Settlement of our Ecclesiastical Constitution, must be rank'd with the odd Opinions of private Men, I think verily it's time to have done arguing, for it can't be to much purpose. For my part, I as little like it, that any particular set of Christians should appropriate to themselves the name of Professors, as you do, that the High Party should appropriate to themselves the name of the Church. And I am as well satisfy'd as you your self, that the major part of the present Bishops are as truly of and for the Church as the rest: But if you would thereby insinuate, that they are of your mind as to the sense of the Terms of Conformity, tho' I doubt you give a hint which they in the present Juncture will not much thank you for, yet until they publicly declare themselves, it would not signifie much to argue, what Alteration even their sense would occasion, when contrary to the current stream from the first Settlement of the Constitution.

p. 25.

But when I aim'd, by my Historical Account, to represent the Church as opposite to your Sentiments, how does it appear that my History contradicts my Design? All that I design'd, was to prove, that the Governors of the Church had generally been of a sense different from yours, and manag'd Matters accordingly; and this is prov'd by my History;

story; where then lies the *Contradiction*? Why it seems, *I shew by my History, that a part of the Church has all along been of your mind.* Very true. I had been inconsistent with my self if I had not own'd this; when I had declar'd, that I fell in with you, as to your general Position, that there had been two sorts of Persons in the Church from the first Reformation: But as long as it appears they were the smaller Part, the inferiour Part, that went your way, while those cloath'd with Authority were generally of another mind, and ran in another strain, my *History* is so far from *contradicting my Design*, that it most effectually reaches it. It looks a little uncouth for you to talk to others of *the depth of their great Reasoning*, while you stumble upon such plain Ground. p. 26.

But when I had prov'd, that the generality of the Governors of the Church, from its first Settlement, have understood the Terms of Conformity as we do, for you to call my asserting it, *a Conclusion beyond the Premises, and a stretch in Arguing to be wonder'd at*, seems to look as if you could not allow your self to suppose any Conclusion could be well ground'd that makes against you: But it were justly *to be wonder'd at*, if you herein could expect a general concurrence.

You seem pleas'd with the Harmony you apprehend you discern between Mr. *Hoadly's* Sense and yours. 'Tis pity to rob you of your Satisfaction. Tho' for my part I must own, that he seems to me sometimes to fall in with the Imposers against you; and at other times, to side with you against them. However, having so plainly referr'd you to Bishop *Aylmer*, and the Archbishops *Whitgift*, *Bancroft*, *Laud*, and others, methinks you carry'd the matter much too far, when you tell me I han't produc'd one Bishop or Divine owning our sense of things, in any Particular, p. 27.

saving

Saving that one of excluding the Scrupulous. Your three Queries that follow, I must not omit.

You ask me, *Whether the care of the Constitution was not as much intrusted with Grindal and Abbot, as with Whitgift and Laud?* A proper Question enough, I confess, had you given good proof, that *Grindal* and *Abbot* had publickly given their sense as to the Terms of Conformity, differently from the other two. They were not indeed so eager in urging the Impositions; they admitted more into Livings without Subscription; they were against prosecuting useful Ministers, that would but read the main of the Liturgy, and use such of the Ceremonies as they did not esteem sinful: But that they so differ'd from them, as to give another sense of the Obligation of those that did Subscribe in the most usual Form, I am not aware.

When you farther query, *Whether the care of the Constitution ben't as much intrusted with the Bishops now, as with them in 1662?* I reply; Their legal Power is without doubt the same; and that they will admit a different sense of the Terms of Conformity, from what was current among their Predecessors at the time you mention, will then be credible, when they have thought fit to make any publick declaration to that purpose; not before: But for an obedient Son of the Church, to ask, *Whether wise and holy Men out of the Government, may not be as able to judge of the Constitution by the Articles, Liturgy, and Laws about them, and their own engagements thereunto, even as the Bishops themselves?* looks odd. I can't but think the Bishop of *Lincoln* will expect more Deference from a Presbyter in his Diocese, that has sworn Canonical Obedience to him, than that amounts to.

I hope

I hope you'll allow me to put one Query in my turn ; and I think it a fair one. 'Tis only this : Whether you your self believe the Story you have inserted out of the Second Volume of the Life of King *William*, that casts the blame of obstructing the Union, after the Revolution, upon the *Presbyterians*? If you do really believe it, I would desire you to consider, that it was the ejected Ministers themselves that were concern'd, and not their *Successors*, whose Age (to say no more) you have frankly told us *you can't think requires the same Reverence* : And therefore if I were in your case, I would not for the future profess so much respect for the Memory of these angry Gentlemen, that obstructed the Union. If you do not believe the truth of the Fact, and yet have related it, it may be worth your while to consider, whether you are not plainly guilty of what you injuriously charge upon your Neighbour ; that is. of *groundlessly insinuating what you dare not assert*.

p. 29.

1 Def. p. 3.

Index;

p. 2.

As to the Head of *Re-ordination*, I think I have said enough, and am not for needless Repetitions. What you have advanc'd afresh, I have seriously consider'd. Your Insinuation, as if Popish Priests are to be Re-ordin'd in the Church of *England*, was, I must confess, surprising and new to me. However, that it is a strain upon the Act of *Uniformity*, to imagine the Popish Ordinations are prefer'd before Ordinations by Presbyters, when it requires a Re-ordination in the latter case, and says nothing as to the former, I should hardly have expected would have been declared by one, who but in the Page before own'd in so many Words, that the Ordination of Popish Priests was esteem'd valid formerly. If before that Act Popish Orders were valid, and that Act was so far from invalidating them, as to say nothing of them, then I think

p. 40, 41.

think they must be valid still; which can't be said as to Presbyterian Ordination, because the contrary is declar'd so plainly. This, I must confess, I look upon as a preferring Popish before Presbyterian Ordination. But when it is acknowledg'd, that Popish Ordination was valid, and according to Law, before that Act, to fetch a Parallel from *Mahumetanism*, or any thing else in which the Law and Practise in the Church of *England* had no concern, rather tends to confound People, than to give them the *clearer Light* you had promis'd them just before.

p. 42,43. But it seems you are apt to think *the Act of Uniformity does exclude Popish Priests*. I must declare I'm heartily content it should do so: And if instead of the instance of one *Antony Egane*, you could produce a hundred, I should rejoice: But whether a Popish Priest becoming a Convert to the Church of *England*, and declaring himself ready to *Assent, Consent, and Subscribe*, but insisting on his Popish Ordination as truly Episcopal, in the sense of our Law, would not be able to make his own way to a Living when presented to it, I still much question.

Your starting this matter, hath put me upon making some Enquiries; and I find that Popish Priests coming over to your Church, are sometimes Re-ordain'd; and at other times admitted without it; which they could not be, if the Validity of their Popish Orders were overthrown by the Act for Uniformity. Monsieur *Du Val*, who was twenty five Years a Benedictine Monk, and twelve Years Prior of his Order, becoming a Protestant, was Re-ordain'd at *Zurich* in *Switzerland*; and afterwards coming into *England*, offer'd himself to be Ordain'd again by the Bishop of *London*, who wav'd it, on the account of his having receiv'd Episcopal Orders in the Church of

Rome.

Rome. Monsieur *Profondaine* and Monsieur *Deanbroche*, were both of them Popish Priests, and now Officiate, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of *England*, in the Congregation in *Pearl-Street* in *Spittle-Fields*, and, as I am inform'd, were never Re-ordain'd. Monsieur *Argentel*, Abbot *l'Ozok*, Monsieur *Renault*, Monsieur *Richon*, and others, have been Re-ordain'd, not as urg'd to it by the Bishop, but to satisfie the Congregations where they Officiate, who scrupled their Popish Ordination, and requir'd their being Re-ordain'd, as an evidence of the sincerity of their Conversion, and a proper Method to prevent their playing such Tricks, as the Consistory at the *Savoy* well knows some have done; who after being admitted upon their Recantation, have return'd back to *France*. For any thing that appears, your *Antony Egane* might be Re-ordain'd on some such account; and therefore I can't see that this case, till better clear'd, gives any ground for an Argument.

And why must I be so insulted about Mr. *Humphreys*? You referr'd me to him; and I referr'd you back to the same Author. You referr'd me to his *Tract in Twelves* upon Re-ordination. I told you, that if you had read his *Second Discourse* on the same Subject, in *Quarto*, you would hardly have thought the citing him could serve your purpose. p. 44.

You now talk of a Second Edition of his Book on that Subject, which you own you have never seen, and yet from thence pretend to *set me right*. This, I confess, is pleasant! To turn a *Second Discourse* upon a Subject into a *Second Edition*, and then to argue from it without seeing it! But you seem to think, that even what I have quoted from thence, gives you some Advantage: By which you plainly shew your unacquaintedness with

with that good Man's Scheme of Thoughts, and the Particularities of his Case. If before you write again you'l but be at the Pains to get and peruse, not his *second Edition*, but his *second Discourse about Reordination*, printed in Quarto, 1662, you'l plainly see, that what I asserted was upon good Grounds, *viz.* that the requiring Reordination after 1662, of those that had been Ordain'd by Presbyters, was really design'd, and tended to nullify their past Orders; and that I did not overlash in asserting it, by far so much as Mr. *Humphreys* himself whom you referred me to. I beseech you in your next *Index*, don't charge me in such a Case as this, with *confidently affirming things contrary to plain Evidence*, least you tempt People to think that you don't so much mind whether you have Ground for your Charges, as whether they are likely to make an Impression in your Favour, on such as think fit to take things upon Trust from you, without examining.

The Introduction to my Second Part, (which you next proceed to) I publish'd as the Grounds of my own Non-conformity. I publish'd it partly, to avoid the Supposition I find you and some others so inclin'd to run upon as if I concurr'd in every thing in my Tenth Chapter, in which I represented the Sense of the Ejected Ministers; and partly that if you or any else would favour me with Remarks, I might have the Benefit of improving by them: You are the first from whom I have had any Objections; and I shall in a narrow compass freely consider them, as far as I understand them.

p. 47, 48.
&c.

You intimate that I have not made due allowance for the Difference between *Ceremonies* and *external Circumstances*. I answer, I'm for allowing as much for the Difference between them as I can discern to be requisite. I do indeed call

Kneeling

Kneeling and Dipping, Circumstances of the two Sacraments, because they are certain Modes of Dutys, that are in the General requir'd, without any certain fix'd Mode of Divine Appointment: But as for *Godfathers*, (where the Case does not in its own nature require Sponsors) and the *Cross in Baptism*, I do call them Innovations; because I know not their Warrant. You say, that having Godfathers, and being sign'd with the Cross are *Circumstances*. I hate quarrelling about Words: Give them what Name you please. Call them *Ceremonies*, call them *Circumstances*, or what else you will, if they are such Confinements, or Limitations, or Additions as our Lord has not empower'd any strictly to enjoin in his Church, I have what I aim at. But you say, *such Ceremonies, or Circumstances, the Church in all Ages, has judg'd lawful, and practis'd.* I reply, that several Circumstances relating to the Worship, which God has prescrib'd, have been judg'd Lawful and Practis'd, is not deny'd: The Query is, whether any have a Divine Warrant so to limit any Circumstances of Divine Worship, as to debar others an Opportunity of all Publick Worship that can't comply; much more to add any parts or Appendages thereto, under a pretence of greater Decency and order than the supreme Law-giver has made any Provision for. And 'tis under this Head that I desire Satisfaction:

You seem disturb'd that, *Supposing the Ceremonies* p. 54
that the Church of England hath decreed are lawful in themselves, yet I will not allow that the Church hath Power to Decree them notwithstanding. I answer, I never yet declar'd that I held all the Ceremonies of the *Church of England* Lawful: But supposing they were, I can't allow, that the Church hath Power to decree them, so as to exclude such as are (as they think upon good reasons) dissatisfy'd, till I see her Commission. And I'll add,

that I think you have mention'd another good Reason also, *viz.* That the Disputed Ceremonies, are not of the nature of those Regulations that are necessary to be determin'd. I do indeed own, that as to time and place, it is necessary there should be a Determination. But why? Because if they are undetermin'd there can be no Worship. Now make your use of the Concession. Can you say the same of *Godfathers*, and the *Cross in Baptism*, *Kneeling* at the Communion, and the *Surplice*? You say *the Child must be brought to Baptism, by some one Person or another, though it be not necessary it be by this Particular Person.* What then? Is it therefore as necessary we should have *Godfathers* in order to the keeping up of Baptism, as it is that time and place should be determin'd in order to the keeping up of Publick Worship? Without this your suggestion is nothing to the purpose. Again; you say, *to Confess Christ Crucify'd is a necessary Duty, though it be not necessary to be done by one form of Words, or by one sort of Sign, and that the Sign of the Cross on the Forehead is very significant.* I answer, the Confessing Christ Crucified by a Baptismal Devotedness to him, is indeed a necessary and a plainly prescribed Duty: And the Sign to be us'd in that Solemnity is fix'd and appointed: But as for another Sign, for the heightning the Confession of a Crucify'd Christ, it is so far from being a *necessary Duty*, that I know not that it is justifiable. But if you would bring the matter Home, you must say that the *Sign of the Cross* is as necessary to Baptism as the fixing time and place is to Publick Worship. And what though the Posture of *Kneeling* at the Communion be expressive of Reverence and Humility, is it as necessary that that Ordinance should be received in that particular Posture, as that publick Worship should be carry'd on in some certain Time

and

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and Place? Or is it as necessary, that every Parish Minister should have a *Surplice*, as that the People know where the Church stands, and at what Time God's Worship begins?

As for your Argument, *That if private Persons* p. 57. 58
may determine for themselves in such Cases as these, either one way or other, they may upon some suppos'd Expedience and Conveniency be determined by Superiors; I can see no force in it. For private Persons have a Divine Warrant to determine for themselves in things relating to Divine Worship, as to their Lawfulness or Unlawfulness, Expediency or Inexpediency: And they are Accountable to God for neglecting it: But that Superiors have any such Divine Warrant to determine in these Cases for others, who are capable of judging for themselves, so as to bind them to acquiesce in their Determinations; or that they are Accountable to God for neglecting to make such Determinations, in things own'd to be so far indifferent, as that it is not necessary they be determined one way or other; this should be proved by him that asserts or insinuates it. The *Comliness and Decency of Uniformity* in such things, is more than out-weigh'd by the Danger of bearing hard on Persons truly Conscientious: And a *suppos'd Expedience and Conveniency*, is so uncertain a Boundary, that it leaves a wide Door open for Ecclesiastical Tyranny, which I think we have no reason to encourage or be fond off.

If *these are not things of that great Weight, as to seem worth the while for our Lord and his Apostles to give particular Regulations about them*, it's a sign they are not to be insisted on to the driving any from publick Worship that are not satisfy'd with them: But that the *Judgment and Determination* p. 58
of these Things should better be left to the Prudence of Superiors, than to that of private Persons, as
 2
 plausible

plausible as it appears, has great Inconveniencies: And this can be deny'd by no Man that considers, how easily *the Prudence of Superiors*, (or what at least is called so) may lead them to determine in such things, what Inferiors cannot discover to be Lawful: And how commonly their *Prudence* inclines them to exert their Authority in minute Matters, for the tryal of Inferiors, while their Warrant so to do about things that are Sacred and Divine, is to seek, and difficultly to be found. If they may justifiably *transform indifferent Ceremonies into necessary Rules of Worship*, why may they not *transform indifferent Opinions into necessary Articles of Faith*? You say it is a quite different thing: Nor did I intimate there was an Agreement between them in all Respects: But I think the one as justifiable as the other. And if you would have convinc'd me, that it is not as really necessary that there be *the same Regulation for all the Churches in the Christian World*, as that there be *a fix'd Regulation of indifferent Circumstantials in all the Churches of a Nation*, you should have shew'd that Protestants have more strength of Reason to urge on the one Head, than Papists have urg'd upon the other.

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If the Worship of God may be perform'd Acceptably without such Determinations, it is a sign they are not *necessary*: Why then are they impos'd? You say *they may be Expedient for Order and Decency*. I answer, as long as the want of *Cross, Surplice, Kneeling*, and other Ceremonies, necessarily occasions neither Disorder nor Indecency, I can't see how the imposing them can be expedient to Order and Decency. And as for the *preventing Factions and Divisions*, that I think verily need not have been mention'd in the Case, since they are that way rather heighten'd than prevented. Neither is it fair to charge the Differences

ferences this way occasion'd wholly upon the *Weakness, Injudiciousness, and Prejudices* of Inferiors: For if Superiors go beyond their Commission, 'twill be hard to prove that Inferiors are under any real Obligation. In withholding an Obedience which God hath not made due, they are far from *taking upon them the Governor's part*; p. 62. they many times do no more than is necessary to the securing their own *Liberty*, which I think is not to be made light of.

The Rise of this Power that is assum'd, is indeed a most material Enquiry. For Satisfaction here, you refer me to *Civil Power*, and intimate that Ecclesiastical Power, is bottom'd on the same Foundation. You ask me, *How come Governours by their Power to make any Laws, supposing they have such a Power? And add, That the same way, that they came by this, which way soever it be, the same way they came by a Power and Right to oppoint Rules and Ordinances, to determine things for publick Order sake, in which they are not restrained by any Divine or Superior Law.* By the way, I must observe your thus stating the Matter, devolves the Power wholly upon the Civil Governours, and leaves no farther room for the Episcopal Authority in things Ecclesiastical, than in an entire Subordination to, and Dependence on the Civil Magistrate: And on this account you as much differ from many of your own Church, as you do from me. But not insisting on that, I think I have laid in an Answer in my *Introduction*, §. xxiii. xxiv. Civil Powers have a Commission from God to make Laws to bind their Subjects, in things relating to the Civil Government: And there is a Compact between them and their Subjects, obliging them herein to Obedience. But to prove that the Power of binding a whole Nation in indifferent Circumstantials, or Ceremonies relating

to Divine Warship, either is in their Commission from God, or is an Essential Part of the Original Compact, upon which Civil Government as such is founded would be a hard Task. I have no occasion for Proof in the Case, tho' you would put it upon me. For why should I attempt to prove such a Negative? You pretend Civil Governours have such a Power: I may well enough desire Proof of you: And till Proof is given am free to deny, according to all the Laws of Disputation. You say, That Governours *have a Commission, to direct the Actions of those committed to their Care, that they may be best perform'd with Decency and Order in the Church, which tho' it was given upon a particular Occasion is a general Rule.* If you mean hereby that general Rule, *Let all things be done Decently and in Order,* I should think your suggesting something to weaken the Sense I had given of that Rule, and to strengthen your own, might have been worth your while, if you aim'd at my Conviction. But as for your Gloss on our Lord's Commission to his Disciples *to teach those things that he had Commanded,* it is far from being Satisfactory. For tho' our Saviour's Commands in many Instances are Generalities only, yet that, when Governours give Rules, for the use of those particular Signs and Forms and Modes, by which they think the Generals may be best expressed, *this is still a doing what our Saviour Commands,* is such an Assertion as I did not expect from you; and draws after it such Consequences as I know you would abhor: And therefore I shall desire you soberly to reconsider it.

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You next proceed to consider, where that Power of Determining, that is necessary, is lodg'd: And seem disturbed, that I ascribe so much to particular Congregations. As to which I shall only say in the general, I ascribe no more Power

to them, than appears to me necessary to their Regularity : And yet I am so sensible of Inconveniencies that may arise, that I am free to debate the Matter amicably, and ready to receive Light from you or any one else. You tell me, that I have *given up the Cause of the Ejected Ministers*. How so? Did not many of the Ejected Ministers go much farther than I do upon this Head; and plead for the Congregational Government of Churches, as of Divine Right? Were they for this ever the less Ejected? May I not among the different Sentiments of those who were Ejected, incline in some things to one Sortment, and in others to another, and yet think they had all in Common Right on their side, in refusing to fall in with the present National Constitution? Methinks you'd lay me under very strait Confinements. I had thought the Cause depending between the Ejected Ministers, and their Brethren of the *Church of England* had been this, whether or no Conforming as things now stand with us, had been Warrantable and Necessary, or Sinful and Dangerous: *Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists*, who were all in common Ejected, were Ejected on this Account, because they all agreed that Conformity would to them have been Sinful and Dangerous. Have I herein *given up their Cause*, because I ascribe, it may be, something more to particular Congregations, than some of them might have been willing to allow of? Or how am I *professedly gone off from the Principles of the Old Non-conformists*, both before the Wars, and since? If I understand their Principles, they were for a Moderate Episcopacy, join'd with regular Presbyteries, that yet secur'd the Rights of particular Congregations. Now for my part I'm not for asserting any such Rights of particular Congregations, as should be

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inconsistent with regular Presbyteries, meeting for Consultation and Advice; or a Moderate Episcopacy as a Presidency, and in order to a Scriptural Superintendency over Ministers and People. Or how have I given up the Cause of the Reformed Churches? I take their Cause as Reformed Churches, to be their Separation from the Church of Rome, in order to the Conforming in Doctrine, Worship and Discipline to the Word of God. Are they herein ever the less justifiable, supposing I should apprehend a little more regard were due to the Rights of particular worshipping Assemblies, than among some of them is discernable? I can have a sufficient Respect for the Church of Scotland, and heartily bless God for their Provincial and National Assemblies, and yet not be able without farther Light to go so high as some among them may do, as to the governing Power of Synods over particular Congregations. I have as great a Veneration as you for the once flourishing Churches of France, and yet think that your Quotation out of Mr. Quick's Synodicon, is rather a Proof, that Persons under Prosperity are apt to carry things too far, than an Evidence that they were wholly in the Right, in their Proceedings upon that Occasion. And as for what you Quote out of the Heads of Agreement,

p. 69. I so far concur, that I look upon Meetings of Ministers to consult and advise about Ecclesiastical Matters to be according to the Mind of Christ: And I think particular Churches ought to have a reverential regard to their Judgment so given; and yet I don't see, but that 'tis fittest to leave it to each worshipping Society to determine for it self the necessary Circumstances of Worship: You

p. 70. ask, How can the publick Authority, or Pastors united together have less Power, than the single Pastors and Elders of one Congregation? And if one Pastor's

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Determination of Circumstances under due Regulations, oblige that one worshipping Assembly, then the United Determination of many such by themselves or Delegates, may you say oblige all the Congregations belonging to them. I can't tell whether you mean thereby any more than I had own'd before, Sect. lvi. viz. that consistently with my Scheme propos'd, Synods have their Use, in a way of Consultation, Admonition and Advice, to repress Disorders, determine Differences, and regulate by Consent such things as are of common Concernment. If you mean any more than regulating by Consent, things of common Concernment, I don't understand you: And if you do not, my Scheme allows it. For my part should the Pastor and Elders of a particular Congregation agree to fix the Time or Place of Meeting to the common Inconvenience of the Society, I should think they went beyond the limits of their Power: And I should have the same Apprehension, should a Classical or Provincial Assembly therein attempt to impose upon them, contrary to their own Convenience. I am for each Congregations choosing their own Pastor. And should a whole Synod here impose upon them, I can't see that it could be justified, any more than when Lay-Pastors do it by the Right of Patronage. But that either a Synod, or Lay-Patrons that have an Ancient Right, propose a number of duly qualified Persons, out of whom the Congregation is left to choose one to have the Pastoral Care of them, is what may help to prevent Disorder, and a thing against which I have no considerable Objection.

I cannot see how one Pastor's Determination of Circumstances under due Regulations obliges that one worshipping Assembly that he has under his Care, any farther than they appear to those of whom that Assembly is compos'd, to be due Regulations:

ons : And I'll easily grant, that *the United Determination of many such Pastors by themselves or Delegates*, especially if there be as is usual in *Scotland*, a Number deputed from the People also joining with them, *may oblige all the Congregations belonging to them*, in things of common Concernment that need to be regulated by Consent ; and yet I don't see, but that it is fittest for each Congregation to judge for it self, whether or no such general Regulations are really necessary, and suit its Circumstances : And I cannot see the Grounds of the Power that any pretend to, to obtrude such general Regulations where they would be be manifestly inconvenient. And tho' *the Command of the Magistrate won't lessen the Obligation* in such a Case, yet neither will it heighten it, so as to make it the Duty of a Congregation to embrace such a Determination of Circumstances, as would be manifestly Detrimental to the common Good.

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After all, I'll own the matter has its Difficulties: And there is one thing you have mentioned as an Objection, which I was aware of ; and I think deserves to be considered. You ask, *whether, when a particular Congregation determines some Circumstantials relating to publick Worship, every individual Person in the Congregation must agree to the same, before he or she is obliged by such an Order ; or whether some particular Persons must determine the rest ; or the major part must determine the less.* I answer : I take the Method of Management requisite in this Case, to be rather Prudential, than Authoritative. Suppose then, each Congregation upon the Advice, and under the Inspection of the Pastor, chooses a number of Persons to act in Conjunction with him in agreeing upon necessary Circumstantials, relating to Time and Place, &c. why mayn't the Inconveniencies you object be

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be this way avoided. When this Church-Committee, is chosen by the Pastor's Advice and under his Inspection, out of the whole Congregation, 'tis hard to suppose they should fix on the Weakest; or such as are likely to bear hard on their Brethren: And when they are chosen by the Community, they will for that Reason be the more likely to acquiesce in their Regulations. Suppose at worst that any Persons are aggrieved, as long as they have a Liberty of removing to any other Congregation, where such Circumstances are determined more to their Satisfaction and Conveniency, they have no great Cause of Complaint. Or if the *Weakness* or *Humour* of any Number should create Differences, a Classical or Synodical Meeting, of Deputies from the several Churches in such a District, it might be hop'd, would be able calmly and amicably to compose and heal them. I pretend not that this Method is free of all Inconveniencies; nor do I apprehend any one could be pitch'd on that would be so: But it appears to me liable to the fewest of any I have met with; and therefore and so far I am for it, but upon no other Account, nor any farther. And I am the more confirm'd, in that I find it has been the Opinion of some of the Worthiest Men we have had among us; that a prudent Mixture of the *Episcopal*, *Presbyterian*, and *Congregational* Principles, would make a better Form of Government for the Church, than any one of them separately.

The *imposing* in such things as these, is, I confess, what I am most against. Nor do I find that you are any great Friend to it. I'm the more against it, because I find the attempt of imposing any thing on the Disciples but what was necessary, is represented as *a tempting God*, *Act.*

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15. 10. a bringing the matter to a tryal of skill with him, whether he could keep the Church quiet, when rigid Impofers took the direct courfe to diftemper and trouble it.

But as for what you assert, *That fupposing the Church to have strain'd her Power beyond her bounds; fupposing that our Rulers have err'd in the manner of their impofing thefe things, that the Constitution requires, with fuch Penalties, yet if the things themfelves are lawful, we are bound to fubmit, I cannot fall in with you without clofe Confideration.* I grant indeed, the Magiftrate hath a Power to keep People from profaning the Lord's Day, by employing that facred Time in fecular Matters, or even totally abfenting themfelves from all publick Worfhip. I ftand to what I have asserted, *That he may oblige his Subjects ordinarily to attend the folemn Worfhip of God in the way they professedly choofe, or againft which they don't fo much as pretend matter of Confcience; and yet I think there may be matter of Confcience pretended, and that juftly too, againft ordinarily using a way of Worfhip, which yet is own'd fo far lawful, as that Perfons, if ferious in it, may obtain the divine Bleffing.*

p. 73, 74. You here feem to confront me with the Sayings of feveral of the ejected Minifters; but you muft give me leave to tell you, that I in all cafes diftinguifh between Authority and Reason. However, in what you quote from Mr. Baxter, I freely concur. I never thought that *that is unlawful to be obey'd, which is unlawfully commanded.* And yet if a thing is *unlawfully commanded,* I don't think it is prefently a Duty to do it, becaufe it is *commanded*: I reckon my felf in fuch a cafe oblig'd to confider it in all its Circumftances, and from them to determine whether my

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compliance would be commendable or blameable. *I pretend not that Scripture is a Rule, where it is not; nor do I deny lawful things, on pretence that Scripture is a perfect Rule for all things.* And yet I think both Reason and Scripture will justify my refusing compliance with several things that may be in themselves lawful, (*i. e.* so lawful, as that in some Circumstances they would be strictly justifiable) that are obtruded on me in such a manner, as that my compliance would be notoriously detrimental, either to the Publick or my self.

I grant, *that it is not all one to say, thou shalt not command it, and to say, thou shalt not do it:* And yet where God says to Superiors, *You shall not command it,* I don't know that he says in the same thing to Inferiors, *Yet if it be lawful, it is your Duty to do it:* For the thing that is unlawfully commanded, may in some Circumstances be lawful, and in other Circumstances, and to others, it may be unlawful. And if so, then it may be either a Sin, or a Duty to comply, according to Circumstances.

I fully agree also with Mr. *John Oldfield*, in his Soliloquy. I think the plain *Question* lying before a Minister, that is studying the Point, whether he should be a *Cofnormist* or a *Nonconformist*, is this, *Whether the Conditions that are impos'd be sinful or not? Sinful not only in the imposition of them, but in his submission to them.* But then I think a submission to things sinfully impos'd, in some Circumstances, may be lawful, and in other Circumstances sinful. You quite mistake me, when you apprehend that I hold it unlawful for Persons to submit to do things lawful in themselves, *maerly because they are requir'd by their Superiors, only to maintain their own Christian Liberty.* I never yet publish'd such Doctrine either from Pulpit or
 Prefs;

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Press; and I hope never shall. Did I know any thing I had advanc'd, from whence that would follow as a Consequence, I would upon that very account disown it. I don't expect *any Thanks for venting* such a Notion as this: Nor do I think my self much oblig'd to you for charging me with it; for which I can't discern you had any ground. You may press the *Absurdities* that follow upon this Principle upon whom you please for me; for I am unconcern'd in them.

p. 77, &c.

I should have thought there had been various other things in my Introduction that might have deserv'd your notice when your hand was in; but seeing you thought otherwise, I make no complaint. I won't charge any thing of this kind as a *Neglect*, as you do upon me. I envy you not the Compassion you may that way excite: I really think there is a liberty to be allow'd in such cases: But then I think he that expects it should be allow'd to himself, should not be averse to the making a like allowance to his Neighbour.

p. 82.

That a stated compliance with the Impositions of the Church of *England* would encourage the Imposers, and be likely to prove a Temptation to a farther Progress in a way of Imposition, and so obstruct our farther Reformation, is, I must confess, with me, a Principle. That it is the same, if we join but now and then in Publick Worship with our Brethren of the Church of *England*, to shew our charitable Disposition towards them, notwithstanding all those Complaints for which in the mean time I think we have just reason, is to me far from being evident. I think I have prov'd the contrary in the latter end of the Tenth Chapter of my Abridgment, and need not do it here again. That it has however been objected against us by some of

our Brethren of the Congregational way, I am well aware: But I think it has been sufficiently answer'd by Mr. *Baxter*, and others. Neither did the Hint in the account of the *Proceedings of the Lords* on the *Bill against Occasional Conformity*, escape my notice. p. 83.

But as high a Respect as I have for that Honourable House, I don't think it necessarily follows, that we have *determin'd the Point against our selves by this Practice* of Occasional Conformity, because they thought it might answer their Ends, as Circumstances stood, to insinuate it to the other House, the rather to induce them to a compliance with them. I must confess, I think the Matter easily clear'd. Did we freely comply with our present Impositions, we should encourage those who are most fond of them, and most eager for retaining them, to believe they had done well in fixing them; and that the rigorous pressing an outward Uniformity, by enforcing Penalties, was the true way to that Peace that is so desirable: Whereas by Worshipping God now and then with them in their way, as we have no concern in several of their Impositions which we most dislike, so declaring we do it to testify our Charity, while we so much dislike the Method they are so fond of, we encourage nothing in them but charitable Thoughts of us; nay, we take a proper Method to convince them, that liberty, in indifferent Matters, is the truest way to Peace, as far as it is attainable. *We declare against the continuance of the Impositions*, even as far as we join with them; by professing, upon all occasions, that we do it not as owning the warrantableness of the Power that fix'd them, but in testimony of our Charity to them, under all their Disorders.

p. 84.

If this tends to uphold the *Impositions*, I cannot tell what would tend to discourage them: If this binds all *Alterations and Amendments*, I profess I know not what would promote them.

p. 85.

As for those in the Church that would *part with Cross and Surplice*, and the other disputed Ceremonies, they are not so numerous as it were to be wish'd: But I think you have an easie Answer to them, when they ask you, *what will satisfie*, by telling them, *that Unity in things necessary, Liberty in things indifferent, and Charity in all*, will do it effectually. In owning that the things you submit to, as prescrib'd by your Governors, are *within the verge of their place, and which it belongs to their Office to determine, according to the Rules of the Word*; tho' you act, I must confess, consistently with your self, yet you go much farther than I can: But I'm free you have your Liberty, if you'll but leave me mine.

p. 86, 88.

To me, I must confess, it both was and is a mighty Objection against Conformity, that if we submit to the present *Impositions*, 'tis hard to know where we shall stop. You tell me, that *according to the avowed Principles of the Church of England, no such thing can be requir'd, as those I mention'd, nor can any Danger lie in this matter*. But this I am not convinc'd of. 'Tis true, *the Church has declar'd against all superstitious Ceremonies*; but as long as She must judge which are so, and which are not so, how know I (that am not satisfied, those She has at present enjoin'd are free of all *Superstition*) that She may not in time come to reckon some other Ceremonies, that at the Reformation were discarded, to be as free of *Superstition* as those She retain'd. I have the more reason to be afraid of it, having at some certain seasons found evident Workings of such an Inclination in those that have been at the Helm in
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the Church. *She has declar'd also against multiplicity of Ceremonies*; but who can say She may'nt have an Art of adding three times as many Ceremonies more if She sees occasion, without being chargeable with *multiplying* them. For, for what I can discern, if She should do so, and yet say She did not *multiply*, we should be bound to believe her.

You appear, I confess, of the contrary opinion; and intimate, that *you would be no more oblig'd to comply with them than I.* Which is a little strange. For if you own her *Power to Decree Rites and Ceremonies*, which I do not, you must certainly be oblig'd farther than I. You must, to free yourself from an Obligation in any case in which She thinks fit to impose, be forc'd to give distinct proof that She exceeds the bounds of her Power, which it is difficult certainly to fix: Whereas while I own no such Power, I leave the Debates about the Bounds of it, to those who think a Dispute on that Head can be to their Edification, or Satisfaction. And if still You are *as free as I*, I heartily congratulate you, and rejoice with you; and see no occasion for any farther Contention about the matter.

Having thus lightly touch'd on my first Part, and my Introduction, you at length fall upon the second Part of my Defence, where you treat me most severely; and will allow me no Quarter. All that I can say in the general is this: Had you been more free of your Reasons, and more sparing in your Censures and Aspersions; had there been more of Candor in your Discourse, and less of Passion; more Frankness, and less Partiality, I don't think it would have been any damage to the Cause you espouse. However, I'll touch upon the several Heads of the Debate; and make some Remarks upon your Treatment; but

in such a manner, as to give you as little offence as may be.

p. 90.

Of *Assent*
and *Consent*.

You begin with the Affair of *Assent* and *Consent*: Which is indeed a capital Part of the Controversie. You add a great many Words, but nothing that I can see that is new. You make great Out-cries with very little Reason. You are unwilling to let the Matter be determin'd by an Evidence which, I must confess, I thought decisive. And when you have spent a great many Pages upon the Matter, we are but where we were. You seem to think you did well to *Assent* and *Consent*, and that barely to the use of what is prescrib'd: Whereas, for my part, in the Worship of God, I should not *Assent* and *Consent* to use what I did not approve of, nor think that in doing so, I answer'd the end of the Constitution.

p. 92,93.

By the way, you charge me with a Mistake, that I said *the Settlement fix'd, by the Uniformity Act, was expressly appointed to root out Discord in Opinion, and establish Agreement in Religion*: But I hope you would not have it a capital one, when any Man that reads the Preamble of that Act, will find it declar'd in so many Words, that it was for the preventing *Factions and Schisms, to the great decay and scandal of the Reform'd Religion of the Church of England, and for settling the Peace of the Church*, that it was so and so Enacted. I must confess I am here at a loss for the difference.

p. 94.

A little after you charge me with what is worse. You tell me, That whereas *your Words were undeniably true as you laid them down, I have made them ridiculous, and worse, by my repeating them, and leaving out what explains them*. I can safely say I had no such design. For I gave your Assertion and your Reason for it. Your Assertion was that

that the sense of the Imposers of these Disputable Matters was impossible to be known. Your Reason was; because of the difference of Sentiments in such great Bodies of Men as Two Houses of Parliament, or Convocation. Had I intended to have conceal'd your meaning, that their sense was impossible to be known *unless they declar'd it*, I should hardly have given your Reason, which I think sufficiently explains it without that Addition. For the sense of the greatest Bodies I suppose you can't deny is as *possible*, nay as *easy* to be known, when it is *declar'd*, as the sense of any particular Persons. You may believe me therefore, that Abbreviating was the only design of that omission, and several others; where, had I not been unwilling to enlarge, I had given your Words at full length; and should have done it here, had I thought you'd have so interpreted my omission. However, as long as I never charg'd you with denying the possibility of knowing their sense, when it was *declar'd*, I can't see that I have done you any wrong; but if I have, I beg your Pardon, and am free to do the like in any other case.

Again, you fall upon me for not having recourse to the printed Letter to you, which you sent me, *touching the Declaration, &c.* And lest sufficient notice should not be taken of it, as it was mention'd in the Body of the Book, you have it again in your Index, as an evidence that *I unwittingly neglected the Explication of your Defence*. By which I perceive you laid a greater stress on that Letter than I apprehended. Could I have found any thing of weight in it added to what you had before advanc'd, I had taken more notice of it: But looking upon it rather as a Mark of the Author's good-will to the Cause, than any addition of strength to support it, I confess I did not think

p. 102.

my self oblig'd to enlarge in considering it. But it seems I might have substituted the consideration of that Letter in the room of my *History of Subscriptions*. Had I thought so, I must confess, I had sav'd my self much Time and Pains. But I find 'tis very common for Mens value of Pains to rise or fall, according as their own Notions of things are suited or cross'd. Waving Personal Matters, I'll come to the Point. I thought I had clear'd this matter fully, by the Historical Account I gave you; and for satisfaction in the truth of which I refer you to the *Journal of the Lords*. I profess it grieves me to see how you are put to it. You say, *I don't pretend to have search'd the Journals of the House*. What of that? You must suppose me so weak as to deserve an Article in great Letters in your *Index*, if I should refer you thither, and had not good reason to believe that you'd there find my Account confirm'd.

p. 105.

p. 106.

Have you search'd and found it false? I should have thought such a search worth your while. Nay your neglect of it was inexcusable, when the whole Debate on this Head turns upon it. Access had been easie. The *House of Lords* is a Court of Records: There is resort to their *Journal* every Term upon many Occasions; and I never heard that any Man was deny'd the liberty of a search after any Matter, upon paying the usual Fees. What a poor Evasion is it to say, *you suppose I receiv'd it from some ancient Gentleman!* What's that to the purpose? Let me receive it how or from whom I will, I referr'd you to the *Lords Journal* for satisfaction. But you will farther suppose the Gentleman that gave me the Account, might have a dislike to the Proceedings of the major part of the Commons, and inclin'd to represent the Matter as suitable to the Design for which I quote it, as he

could

could do with truth. But what need of such a weak Supposition, in a case where I put you in a way of letting your own Eyes give you satisfaction? Tho' upon second Thoughts I don't know but it may be very well that the *Lords Journal* did not fall under your Inspection in the Mood you were in, when you made these Suppositions: For, had you found my Account confirm'd, and verify'd in every part, I'm afraid you'd have been apt to have suppos'd, that the very *Journal* it self had been alter'd in my favour, and on purpose to give me the advantage over you.

Having done with Suppositions, you go to Arguing. You say, *the inward sense of one part of the Legislature, namely, the House of Lords, was clearly for you.* I say, No. It does not appear they were for you, that the bare use was all that was intended by the Act of Uniformity; but out of a sense of the inconvenience of any thing more, they were for making that sufficient for time to come, but could not prevail: It was their desire it might be so, not their sense it was so. The Clause the Lords were for adding ran thus; *And be it Enacted and Declar'd by the Authority aforesaid, That the Declaration and Subscription of Assent and Consent in the said Act mention'd, shall be understood only as to the Practise and Obedience to the said Act, and not otherwise.* This could not be carry'd: Give a reason for it if you can, besides this: That the Majority of the Two Houses, when the Matter came to be closely debated, were for having more understood by Assenting, Consenting, and Subscribing, than Agreeing Ordinarily to use the Common-Prayer-Book, and practising in Publick Worship according to it. You talk of the *inward sense of the Lords* in the case. That was against you rather than for you. For they were sensible more than bare use was then requir'd,

p. 107.

and would be so for time to come: And they were for *enacting* and *declaring*, that *Use* should for the future be sufficient. In the Determination which they were inclined to, for the future indeed they agreed with you: But as long as that could not be carried, I don't see you can argue from it. For when the Majority of the *Lords House*, after a Debate with the *Commons*, were for leaving this Clause out, and so yielding that more than *Use* should be understood, rather than they would offend the *Commons*, I don't see but it was the *inward Sense* of the Majority, that bare *Use* must not do, and would not suffice to answer the Law.

p. 108.

You are pleased to say, *whatever mind the Commons were of, you are sure the Lords were for your Sense at least till July 18. 1663 whereas the Law that obligeth you was Anno 1662.* But here you run too fast. You cannot be sure of it; the contrary is rather evident. But if you had them of your Sense till then, what signifies it, as long as 'tis evident they vary'd then and afterwards? Nay, what signifies it to have their *inward Sense*, if you have not that of the *Commons*? But you

p. 109.

say, *There were several Amendments, and this Clause was but one; and in this thing you question, whether the Matter be fairly represented: For that you suppose it highly probable that the Commons did not protest against this Clause by it self, but against several Alterations and this among them.* A good Guess enough, I confess: But there was here no need for it, when you might have seen the Matter with your own Eyes but neglected it: And I can assure you there's no room for it. For it was not till after the other Amendments and Alterations had been read Twice and agreed to, that the additional Clause was read. And it was immediately before the Question was put, whether

ther to agree with the Committee in that Clause, that divers Lords desir'd leave to enter their Protestation, if the Question was resolved in the Affirmative. The other Amendments were less material. Here was all the Debate; and here the Matter principally turn'd. But to suppose the Commons, who by all the Acts that they at that time made, appear to have run all Things to the highest, to oppose the moderate Part of the House of Peers, when Zealous for adding a softening Clause in an Act design'd for the farther Explication of the Act for Uniformity; and to do it for this Reason, because *it was in their Judgment needless, and declarative only, of what they thought already sufficiently declared in the Act it self,* is so wild a Supposition, and carrys in it so direct an Impossibility, that 'tis to very little purpose to argue with one that lays stress upon it. And behold after all, I put you into p. 110. a way to come to the Knowledge of Matter of Fact, by repairing to the Clerk of the House of Lords to see their *Journal*; which if you do, you need not depend on *my Relation* any farther than you find it agreeable with what is there inserted. This I put you upon, because the Controversy turns upon the Matter.

As for *Reasons*, if in this Case you can find any in the *Journal*, either of *Lords* or *Commons*, I shall wonder at it: For that is a rare thing: They enter Fact, without Reasons, unless it be of late. You want to know *why the Commons had no more* p. 111. *Profelytes without Doors?* Truly Sir, you put me to it. For if I do not answer, you tell me, *all my Argument from this Relation is an Absurdity.* And if I should answer it, you'd be ready to tell me, that I was Censorious, and went too far in judging, &c. as you so often do on other Occasions. But really I don't think my self obliged

to account for the Matter, I'll leave you to guess. You ask me, *Why not One Book in Forty Years from the Hottest Church-men, to declare against your Sense, given by Fulwood, Falkner, Sherlock and Stillingfleet, &c.* Possibly they are for leaving it to Men of your Sense to draw Persons into the Church, as thinking they shall be well enough able to deal with them when you have drawn them in; though not so likely to entice them to enter the Constitution, as you by your softer Sense of things may do. This has been suggested by some, And I must needs say, I believe there may be something in it.

You still seem to question, whether any Man gave his *Assent and Consent* in the Sense we put upon that Declaration. Nay, you question it as to Dr. *Sherman* himself, whose Case I mention'd. I wonder, I must confess, you should say I don't tell you where you may enquire farther about the Story concerning the Doctor, when I tell you where he was Minister, and at what Place he made his Recantation. Had I desir'd Privacy or Concealment, or had any design to serve, you may be assured, I should have mentioned the Person only, and said nothing of the Place. Tho' I don't see how I am capable of taking any Method to certify you about a Matter of Fact, when a Reference even to the *Lords Journal*, (the most Authentick Evidence in the Kingdom) will not give you Satisfaction. But whether he did not *Assent and Consent* to more than the Use, let any Man judge, that reads his Recantation which I have inserted.

But you tell me, *one Passage is obliging*: I profess I'm glad there is one. And that if I would have spoken out, it might have been a good step towards the ending of this Part of the Controversy. 'Tis a very good Hearing. I'll try if I can speak
out

out now. You say I seem willing to suppose it to be an *Hyperbole* in the Gentleman I quoted, who saith, [*that Words could scarce be devised by the Wit of Man more full and more Significant than those in the Common-Prayer Book.*] And at this you are mightily pleased. Truly Sir, you need not speak so diminutively in the Case; for I frankly assure you, I mention'd the Words as *Hyperbolic*; and so I did what follows as to *the highest Justification and Commendation of every Point and Syllable, &c.* All that I understand thereby was this: That the *Assenting and Consenting to all and every thing contained and prescribed, &c.* was too much, for a Book that contains many things liable to just Exception. And that yet continues my Notion of the Common-Prayer Book. That the Ministers, that were Ejected, had good reason to refuse such an *Assent and Consent*; I think I have prov'd. That we that come after them may justly continue in that Refusal, upon the Evidence I have given, that your Sense is opposite to that of the Legislators, is what I am the more confirm'd in, from the Weakness of your Reply to it. And since you have nothing to disprove me, but Suppositions, I shan't enlarge. For I'm no Admirer of arguing for Argument sake.

As much however as you were obliged with the Hint foregoing; and as much as you promised to yield under the next Paragraph, instead of any mighty Concession, I find I am in the very next Page, (upon a certain Supposition) charg'd with a *base and slanderous Reflection, unworthy of a Brother and Fellow-Christian.* These are hard Words, and such as I shan't study to return. I'll quit a Cause that needs such Methods to support it. For my part, if I can judge by your Writings, you remain as dissatisfied with some things, that are in the Common-Prayer requir'd to be used, (and that

that so far as they are required to be used too) as some of us, who for these things are kept out of the Church. I'll give you for Instance the Office for the *Burial of the Dead*: Which you know is to be used over all, but such as die unbaptized, or Excommunicate. And yet you are so dissatisfied to use it in the Case of some, that you declare your self, you'll rather take your Horse and ride out of Town, than stay and perform the Office. I'd fain know then, where lies the *Baseness* and the *Slanderosness* of a *Reflection*, for which your self have given so just Occasion? I beseech you next time give softer Words: Do it at least for your own sake, if not for mine.

p. 120,
121.

I heartily concur with you in your *Opinion*, that the Things our Debates run upon might very well be spared, without any *Detriment* to Religion or the publick Worship, and for Peace and Union sake; they having been the Occasion of so much Contention, and Quarrel amongst us. Only at your Leisure you may think, if these things have been the Occasion of so much Contention and Quarrel amongst us, How you could say, pag. 61. That the determining them was expedient to prevent *Factions* and *Divisions*.

p. 129.

After all, if you have nothing to do with the *Ejected Ministers* in this Matter, I have nothing to do with you. For the justifying their Proceeding, and ours upon the same Bottom, was my Aim. And if you have nothing to do with them, why should we contend? The *Representation* I gave of *Conformity*, at which you was so angry, was theirs, not mine. Defend your selves as long as you please, provided you'll but let us alone. You may renew your *Assent* and *Consent* once a Month, or once a Year if you see good: But I would advise you to consult the *Journal of*
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the Lords, to which I referred you, before you recommend that Practise to others.

The next Head does not need many Words. For if, when your Church declares, *that it is certain from God's Word, that Children which are Baptized, dying before they commit actual Sin, are undoubtedly sav'd,* you will understand only *some Children,* 'tis not in my Power to help it: But you must give me leave to take it otherwise; and so would you in another Case. In the mean time I agree with you, that such as have a Right to Baptism, as the Seed of Believers, are taken into Covenant with God, and have a Right to Baptism for sealing and confirming the Covenant to them, and for assuring the Blessings promised therein; and that those whom God is pleased thus to take into Covenant with himself, dying without actual violating the Covenant, are saved. However, when there is a general Latitude in Practise as to Admissi-
 on to the Ordinance of Baptism, I should not think it becoming one concerned for Reformati-
 on, to justify an Expression in a Rubrick that tempts multitudes to fancy that it is clear from the Word of God, that Infants are certainly saved, if they are but Baptized. Or if you would take the pains to read the Learned *Gatker, de Baptismatis Infantilis Vi & Efficacia,* I believe you might change your Mind. That Baptism is a *sign of Regeneration or the New Birth,* I am as clear in as your self: But the Use of the Passages objected against in the several Offices referred to, is therefore disliked, because it tempts many to think that no farther Regeneration is needful.

I am convinced, *that Ministers must diligently teach the People the difference between a Jew outwardly, and a Jew inwardly: How all are not Israel, who are of Israel:* And for that Reason I think
 should

Of the Rubrick about the certainty of the Salvation of Baptized-Infants.

p. 131.

p. 136,
137,

p. 138.

should not unteach them again, by laying a Temptation before them, in the publick Offices he commonly and promiscuously uses, to think there is no difference between a *Baptized Person* and a *Real Christian*. I don't doubt indeed but you conscientiously endeavour to obviate this Mischiefe by your Personal Instructions: But as all are not equally careful with you upon that Head, so neither can I see a just Reason, why any should yield to a Mischiefe in hope they may obviate it, by using Scripture-Expressions in publick Offices as applicable to all, that are applicable only to some; and without that Guard, which the Scriptures often put to prevent an Abuse. I am firmly perswaded, if it were left to you, you'd alter this Matter: Or if you would not, give me my Liberty, and I freely give you yours.

p. 141.

As to *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, you argue from the Liturgies of the Reformed Churches. And you refer first to the *French Discipline*. That that mentions Godfathers is true: But that their Notions about Godfathers, and those of the Church of *England* agree, is to be prov'd. For in *Can. 7.* you have these Words. *Seeing we have no Command of Christ to take Godfathers and Godmothers to present our Children at Baptism, there cannot an express Law be impos'd on Persons to do so: Nevertheless, because it is an ancient Custom, and introduc'd for a good End, viz. to testify the belief of the Godfathers, and the Baptism of the Infant, and also to maintain the Society of Believers in Friendship and Amity, those which desire not to follow it, but would present their Children themselves, shall be earnestly exhorted not to be contentious, but to conform to the Ancient Custom, which is Good and Profitable.*

I must here desire you to observe, That that which they cast on *Godfathers*, is not to Cove-

nant for the Children, and Mimically to answer various Questions in their Names, and as their Representatives, (which Custom the *French Churches* knew nothing of) but to *present the Children at Baptism*. They recommend this as an *Ancient Custom*: But at the same time own, *there cannot an express Law be imposed on Persons about it*. Would but your Church use a like Temper, the Debate on this Head would soon be at an end. And *Can. 12.* gives this as the great Reason of Care in the Choice of Godfathers, *that by their means there may be Appearance, in case of need, that the Children may be well educated*. And such sort of *Godfathers* I have own'd to you, I am not against: Such as in case of need, will take care to give the Children Baptiz'd, a Christian Education. But this widely differs from the *Godfathers* in your Church, who are Covenanting Parties with God on behalf of the Children, design'd to convey to them a Right to Gospel-Blessings; and in order to it, answering a set of Questions, that are not to be accounted for either with reference to themselves, or with reference to the Children, whom they are put upon representing. Again, *Can. 18.* It is ordered, *That Baptisms be Registred in the Church, with the Names of Fathers and Mothers, and Godfathers and Godmothers*. And for this there is very good Reason: That so if Fathers and Mothers die, or fail in their Duty, Godfathers and Godmothers may be called upon to take care of the Education of the Children, according to their Promise. And were there the like Custom in your Church, I should think it highly laudable. You tell me, *That throughout the whole Form of the Administration of Baptism, in the French Churches, we find no mention made of any Act done, or Word spoken by the Parents*. I grant it: But then you might note
also,

also, that neither is there throughout their whole Form, any express mention of *Godfathers* or *Godmothers*. All that occurs is this: There is a Question put in the beginning, to those that hold the Child, *whether they present it to be Baptized?* And a Promise is afterwards exacted, that it shall be instructed in the Principles of the Christian Faith contain'd in the Apostle's Creed; And in the Doctrine of the Old and New Testament; and that it shall be exhorted to a suitable Life and Conversation. And in this Promise, *Parents* and *Godfathers* may join together; and often do: For it is not confined either to the one or the other. And till the *Church of England* leaves a like Liberty, it may warrantably be charged with justling out the Parents from their Right, which the French Churches never did: Nor the Churches in *Zurich* neither; nor in the Adjacent Countries in *Switzerland*. But how Bishop *Morley* p. 142. could say, That in the *Church of England* *Christian Parents* are not forbidden to present their Children to be Baptized, when the Canons so plainly forbid it; I can't imagine. And as for Sureties for Education, in Case of the Death or Negligence of the Parents, you don't find I at all oppos'd them, provided the Matter be so managed, that the Ordinance be kept on its proper Bottom; and a subordinate Care of the Education of the Infants, be all that they are called upon to promise.

The two Things I mainly object against are those which you mention. That Sureties are intended to secure to Infants the Blessings of the Covenant: And that they are to bind the Children to the Duties of the Covenant. You tell me, it appears impossible this last Supposition should be true, from the sufficiency of *Private Baptism*, when there are no Sureties appointed. But I must confess

I see no Improbability, much less an Impossibility arising thence.

For supposing Sponsors design'd to bind the Children to the Duties of the Covenant, there is no reason for them, in Private Baptism, in case of Sicknes, and danger of Death. For there's no room for performance of any Duties in case of Death. But let the Child live, that was privately Baptized in haste, and it is provided that Sureties are to be afterwards added. But say you, such a Child is *declared lawfully and sufficiently Baptized*. Very well! And yet 'tis *Expedient* there be some thing added afterwards, if the Child live.

So that tho' the Blessings of the Covenant may be secur'd without Sureties in case the Child die, and tho' there be no need in such a case of Sureties to bind to the Duties of the Covenant, yet if Life be preserv'd, it may be *Expedient*, that Sureties be added formally to secure the Blessings, and bind to the Duties of the Covenant. — Methinks you are afterwards hard put to it, when you say, *Children are bound by their own Promise or Covenant-Engagement, which their Sureties only declar'd*. For my part, I think verily, to found Infant Baptism upon Promises or Covenant-Engagements of Infants, declar'd by their Sureties, is to betray it.

p. 146.

How can *Sureties vow and promise such and such* 147.
things in the name of Children? You explain it by a Phrase, taken from Dr. Burgess, *viz.* That the Interrogatories in Baptism, intend only an *Adum-* 148.
bration of that Stipulation which is really entred into by receiving the Sacrament of Baptism. This, you tell me, was approv'd by King James I. the then Bishop of Winchester, and the Archbishop; and intimate I should triumph, if I could say the same as to any of my *Interpretations*. Really, Sir, as far

far

far as I can judge, I am not so triumphantly dispos'd on these Matters: But be it as it will as to that, tho' there should be several Kings and Bishops approving the Sense given, I don't see that it therefore follows, that an *Adumbration of the Fœderal Stipulation in Baptism*, in such a way, by the Sureties answering such Questions as are put to them in the name of the Children, is either to be justify'd or accounted for. Nor can I see 'tis at all for the *Edification of the People*. It rather hinders Edification, by confounding them. To draw an Inference from the *Covenanting of Adult Persons at their Baptism*, I can see no reason. For Persons may be allow'd very justly, in dependance on divine Grace, to promise such things for themselves, as others have no warrant with an appearing Solemnity to promise in their Names. Nor am I aware that in this case I have at all *overlash'd in my Expressions*.

I must confess I cannot see how Parents that have a right to Enter their Children under the Divine Covenant, *can transfer their Right to others*. I think the promise of God to Believers and their Seed is a *manifest Reason*, when Children are admitted to Baptism as the Seed of Believers, that *confines* the dedicating them to God, and laying hold of that Promise on their behalf *to the Parents only*, if they survive and are capable of dedicating them Personally to God; and know of nothing you have suggested, that at all weakens this Reason.

If the Parents have no Right, or have forfeited their Right, I grant indeed the case varies: But can't see, that where they have a Right, it may therefore warrantably be broken in upon. In such a case, *Infants may be offer'd to God in Baptism* by the Church, upon the Interposition of some serious Persons undertaking the care of

their

their Christian Education; and I must see better Reasons than have as yet been alledg'd, before I can yield that more is necessary.

As for the *Abuses* in the case of Godfathers, I P. 155. therefore mention them, in order to conviction, that the universal promiscuous use of them in the way of your Church, has occasion'd much *profana- 156. tion of this Ordinance.* And I have my self heard several Members of your Church (and some of them Persons of Eminence too) freely complaining of it: But I deny that *there would be the same 157. Abuses if there were no Godfathers.* For we have no such Abuses among us Dissenters, who admit no Godfathers, except in cases of absolute Necessity; where either Parents are dead, or notoriously unfit to be trusted with the Education of their Children.

I am unconvinc'd of any *Guilt I have contracted 158.* by my way of Writing under this Head: For I have said nothing to discourage serious Persons from undertaking what 'tis fit for any Persons to undertake in the case of the Children of others, *viz.* a care of their Education: All that I discourage, is promising in the Name of the Children of others, what they cannot have a Call or Warrant to promise; and this I must and shall discourage, till I see better grounds for the Practice alledg'd by you and others that encourage it; and I think by your encouraging it, you are chargeable with abetting a Disorder, that is not small in it self, and that draws after it very pernicious Consequences.

The more I consider it, the more it amazes me, to see such Men as you pleading for a Practice that is so unaccountable, as the putting the Questions in the Office to the Godfathers as Personating the Children. 'Tis very near as odd, as the Custom of the *Marcionites*, who when their

Chryf. in Catechumens died, would hide one under the Bed
I Co. 15. of the deceased; and when the dead Man was ad-
 dress'd to, and ask'd whether he would be Bap-
 tiz'd, the Party under the Bed answer'd, *that*
is my desire. Is it not much the same, when you
 say to a Child, (who can no more conceive at that
 time than a dead Man) *Wilt thou be Baptized in*
this Faith, to have the Godfather answering, *That*
is my desire? There only wants this one thing
 farther to compleat the Parallel; That as the
Marcionites used in the case mention'd above, to
 Baptize the live Person for the dead; so you
 should Baptize the Godfather in the Child's stead.
 And, I must confess, I can't see why you mayn't
 Baptize the Godfather, tho' he was Baptiz'd be-
 fore, in the Child's stead; as well as put him
 upon, saying, that *it is his desire to be Baptized,*
 when he needs it not, in the stead of the Child,
 that knows nothing of the matter.

Of Baptiz- That if I conform'd, I should think my self
 ing with- oblig'd constantly to insist on *Sureties*, and the
 out Godfa- *Cross* in Baptism, and *Kneeling* at the Lord's Ta-
 thers, &c. ble, I have over and over declar'd. That it is
 p. 160. highly reasonable however, *that a few unnecessary*
things enjoyn'd by Man, though they were in them-
selves lawful, yet being verily thought unlawful by
Men of well meaning Minds, should be omitted for
that time, rather than the Ordinances of God them-
selves should be so, I freely allow: But the questi-
 on is, whether the Constitution allows for it?
 Which I can't see you have clear'd. You tell
 me, *my Arguments against the Cross, Godfathers,*
and Kneeling, meerly as made Terms of Communion,
 do hold against all Determinations of Circumstances
 in the Worship of God, which any others do scruple,
 and thereby would be debarr'd Communion with us.
 But I have shew'd you the contrary in my Intro-
 duction. You tell me what I have there suggested on
 this

161.

162.

this Head, *may a little serve for the Nonconformists* 165. in London and Westminster; but suppose a Member of a Dissenting Congregation in a Country Town, distant ten or twelve Miles from any other Dissenting Congregation; should scruple the Determination of some sort of Officers; or the Order determin'd, the Form in which they sing, or the like, He is as effectually excluded from all Religious Assemblies, as if the Constitution were National; unless he can with his Family go twelve Miles to Worship. I answer; The going ten or twelve Miles to Worship, is what has been, and is at this day practis'd by some Dissenters, in some parts of the Nation; and must be so, I doubt, by some others too, if they'd worship at their Parish Church. But Good Sir, han't a Man a liberty of Removal to a place where his Conscience may have satisfaction? And in the mean time, mayn't he join in those parts of Worship, against which he has no matter of scruple? In a National Constitution, back'd by enforcing Penalties, without a Toleration, there's no relief by a Removal to another Habitation; there's Uniformity in all Churches: So that a Man must comply with the Publick Demands; or he's debarr'd all Worship, without hazard from the Law. Can any such thing be pleaded upon our Bottom? Suppose the worst, a Man has his Remedy in his own hands by a Removal, which causes a mighty difference.

But to come to the Point under this Head: That our Constitution gives a Man liberty to use the Form of Private Baptism, when Persons scruple Godfathers, is what I cannot discern; I wish I could; for it would create in me a greater regard to your Church, could I find She discover'd any thing of a due Tenderness towards such as are not satisfy'd with her Impositions. That Clause in the Rubrick; *if the Child do afterwards* p. 166.

p. 167.

168.

170.

171.

live, to me plainly confines the allowance of neglecting Godfathers, to the case of danger of death. When the *Diocesan* indeed, upon notice of a particular case, gives allowance to *Baptize a Child privately*, I agree with you it may be justify'd, tho' Sureties are omitted: But that it is otherwise allowable, I cannot discern. And the declar'd *Expediency* of farther Additions afterwards, in case the Child live, much confirms me in my Apprehension. I don't pretend, *that you are bound to believe* my Assertions; I only tell my Apprehensions, and their grounds; and as far as I can judge have the Body of the Clergy concurring with me.

You say, *It is certain, the Church hath not by any Act or Declaration barr'd the scrupling Godfathers from being one of the great causes for which the Dispensation with Private Baptism is to be allow'd.* As certain as it is to you, Sir, 'tis not so to others. For many do reckon the declar'd *Expediency* of the Addition of Godfathers in case the Child live, to be an effectual Declaration, that *the scrupling Godfathers is not a sufficient cause for which the Dispensation is to be allow'd.* And I desire you will at your leisure consider, whether your warmth under this Head, does not reflect more on the whole Lower House of the last Convocation than me. For if you'll consult their *Humble Representation*, presented to the Upper House of Convocation in 1703, you'll find they express it as their sense; *that there hath been a great neglect of bringing such Infants as have been privately Baptized into the Church, to the intent that the Congregation may be certify'd thereof, and the Child be there receiv'd, as one of the Flock of true Christian People, as the Rubrick directs; and that the unjustifiable use of the Form of publick Baptism, in private Houses, hath lessen'd the Reverence due to that holy Office; and*

in some places hath given opportunity to Persons to intrude into the Administration of that Holy Sacrament, and occasion'd those undue Practises of mutilating the Publick Form, and Baptizing without the Sign of the Cross, or Godfathers and Godmothers. Let this be consider'd, and then let any Man judge between you and me upon this Head.

As for this Sense of the Lower House of Con-
 vocation, it equally affects the use of the Sign of
 the Cross, which you think you have a liberty left
 to omit, in compliance with the Scrupulous. That
 which you seem to represent an act of Discretion,
 they tell you is a *Mutilation*. Get off of it how
 you can. And 'tis such a *Mutilation* as many
 have been Indicted for; which could not be, if
 the Law left a liberty.

Whether the Sign of the *Cross* in Baptism be
 of a *Sacramental nature*, or not, I shan't debate;
 nor whether the use of it is simply unlawful; but
 that the Canon about it runs the matter very
 high, is evident.

You say *I have wrested and tortured the Canon*: 174.
 Truly, Sir, were I to fall in with your Church,
 I should fear being *tortur'd* by it. If the Cross
 is *the Sign of Christ's Merits*, as the Canon re-
 presents it, I should be hard put to it to con-
 ceive to what purpose the *Sign* of those *Merits* 175.
 should, under that notion, be apply'd to one that
 had not the *thing signify'd* secur'd, if there were a
 due disposition of the Recipient. Distinguish as you
 please, between *the Sign of the Cross*, and *the sign-
 ing of the Forehead with it*; if the Merits of Christ
 be thereby signify'd, an interest in them must be
 convey'd, where the Sign is rightly apply'd. As
 for the primitive Christians, I don't know that
 they look'd upon the *Sign of the Cross*, as *the Sign
 of Christ's Merits*; and therefore the case is not 176.
 parallel between them and you. Farther, I can't

177. stand your notion of a *Dedicating Sign*. That *Dedicating* should mean only *Declarative*, would in another case be reckon'd unnatural and forc'd. And to me it still appears so here. And the more, because I find so many of the Defenders of your Church carrying the matter farther, as

178. I hinted in the Second Part of my Defence. In

180. what you add afterwards about *Liberty*, you shoot quite beside the Mark, and fight with a Man of Straw. For all I intended, is, That tho' I should reckon it lawful to use the Sign of the *Cross*, yet I would not oblige my self stately to use it, (as I apprehend those do that Conform) and so bind my self to deny Baptism to Infants whose Parents scruple it. This being the case, your Harangue is quite spoil'd. And what you add about the *Vertue and Power of the Cross*, is the poorest shift imaginable.

180.

Appeal to all the World as often as you please, (tho' I suppose in the mean time you intend the Church of England World only by that Phrase) I'll undertake any unprejudic'd Person that will read Mr. Hooker and Dr. Comber, will find *Power* and *Vertue* ascrib'd to the *Cross*, as well as a betokening Significance. That the Canon indeed says, that *the Infant is not receiv'd into the Congregation of Christ's Flock by any Power ascrib'd to the Sign of the Cross*, I grant; and yet it is a powerful Token; *assuring us we shall overcome*, as Dr. Comber expresses it; and *teaching us to avoid whatever may deservedly procure Shame*, as Mr. Hooker has it.

Next time you call a Man's *Trustiness* into question, be advis'd to see to it both that you are innocent your self, and that you have ground for your Charge; or otherwise your charging a Neighbour with the guilt of strange Mistakes, issues in a Reflection upon your self. Or if you desire

desire to Vindicate the use of the Cross effectually, Answer and Confute the Observation I produc'd of Bishop Taylor's; that *A Symbolical Rite of humane Invention, to signifie what it does not effect, and then introduc'd into the solemn Worship of God, is so like those vain Imaginations, and Representments forbidden in the second Commandment, that the very suspicion is more against Edification, than their use can pretend to.* But I perceive you stand mightily upon the catch. For whereas in your first Defence, you referr'd me to what Bishop King had lately written on this subject; I told you, *I thought without offence I might refer you to Mr. Boyse in answer to him.* You now tell me, you refer to Bishop King's Appendix to his Second Admonition; of which we had not a word before; which has no Answer as you know or can hear of. Be it so, that the Bishop's Appendix to his Second Admonition is not distinctly Answer'd; yet it does not follow, that the Arguments it contains were not Answer'd in Mr. Boyse's foregoing Writings. But if you meant that Appendix, I think you should have mention'd it: And if you had, I should have told you then, as I take the liberty to do now, that I can't think it needs an Answer.

Dust. Dub. B. 3. Ch. 4. P. 681.

185.

Refer me to whom you please, for the Posture used by our Saviour, in the Administration of the other Sacrament of the *Holy Communion*, you know very well that the stream of Protestant Writers is against you; for that they generally assert, that our Lord then used the common *Table Posture*. But you have the liberty of your own sense there for me.

Of Kneeling at the Communion. 186.

However, that your Constitution design'd to confine Communicants to a *Kneeling Posture*, is to me very plain and evident: And I think I might among other things, very justly argue from the sense of the Ruling Commissioners, or the

187.

Savoy-Conference. 'Tis true, Bishop *Pearson* declar'd against the Exclusive sense of the Rubrick; but Bishop *Morley* declar'd for it. He is the only Man mention'd indeed in this case by Mr. *Baxter*; but not the only Man that was upon the Secret: For he tells us elsewhere more than once, that Archbishop *Sheldon*, Bishop *Morley*, and Bishop *Hinchman*, were the Managers of this whole Affair.

188.

'Tis most probable, they were all of a mind in this case. I have read Bishop *Morley's* Letter, to which you refer me, where he declares, that the business of *Kneeling* at the Communion was rejected in the beginning of the Dispute, as belonging to the Canons, not the Common Prayer-Book; yet I think we may very justly conclude, that if they who afterwards made sundry Alterations and Amendments, had not intended that the Rubrick, which declares, that the Minister having receiv'd the Communion himself, should deliver it to the People in order, into their Hands, ALL MEEKLY KNEELING, should be interpreted according to the Canon, which determines, that no Minister, under pain of Suspension, should give the Sacrament to any that did not Kneel, they would have alter'd the Rubrick, and that Alteration confirm'd by Parliament, would effectually have vacated the Canon. But they not having done it, 'tis plain, that it was design'd, such as would not Kneel, should be excluded: And you would have found as much, if you had read a little farther in that very Letter of Bishop *Morley's* which you quote; for a Page or two after, he owns in so many words, that our Laws punish by not admitting such unto the Sacrament, as will not, or perhaps dare not, Kneel at it. He gives this as a Reason, that they break the Orders of the Church. If so, then I think those Ministers

nisters who administer the Sacrament to Persons in another Posture, break both the *Laws of the Land, and the Orders of the Church.*

And thus are you Condemned even by Bishop *Morley*, whom you appeal to in the Case. Compare then the *Rubrick*, with what other parts of the Common-Prayer Book you please, so you take but in the Canon, I am satisfied. And tho' you should think your self not obliged to obey that *Canon*, yet I should think you must represent your Constitution as very inconsistent with it self, if you deny that it thence appears, that it aims at obliging all to *Kneel* at the Communion. Let the Hardship arise from the *Canon* or *Liturgy*, (which if I conformed I should think it concerned me to see how I could reconcile together) it is to me much at one: If the *Rubrick* peculiarly concerns the People, the *Canon* concerns you Ministers. Divide the Matter between you as you see good. It suits my purpose either way; though you are pleased according to your usual obliging manner, to say *it is contrary to it.* Take it either way, it appears, the Language of the Constitution, that none but *Kneelers* should receive. And though the *Canon* be not a part of the *Liturgy*, yet I hope 'tis a part of the Constitution. I must needs say, were I to conform, I should think my *Subscription and Declaration*, would oblige me to exclude such as refuse *Kneeling*. But seeing you are determined to understand it otherwise, I am not disposed to contend with you about it. If there is a *Canon* in force, that obliges a Minister upon pain of Suspension, to avoid giving the Sacrament, to any that do not *Kneel*, for a Man that cannot think that that will excuse him before God, to run upon the *Canon's Mouth*, and when it is just going to be discharged upon him, to pretend he will consider and compare, and consult

p. 190.

191.

193.

194.

195.

sult

196. *sult his Bishop, &c.* is to run upon a Precipice, not knowing but he may escape. If this be'n't trifling and worse than trifling, I know not what is.

Of the 3 Orders, of Bishops, Priests & Deacons. As to the *three Orders of Ministry*, I have very little to add. While you believe there were in many Churches the *Three Orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons* from the *Apostle's Time*, you must give me leave to believe the contrary till I have better Evidence. I never yet met with it granted by *Mr. Baxter* as you commonly express it, and I believe never shall. And if you have changed your Mind from what it was, and now hold that the *Antiquity of the Three Orders* is not to be own'd by *Affent and Consent*, I only think you are more out than you were before. But that is to your self; and no Concern of mine. You told me before, that all the *Objection dwindled into a Strife about Words*. That is what I extremely loath. And therefore I added, that let it but be proved that *Bishops, Priests and Deacons* had the distinct Powers now assigned them, and I should own that it would be needlessly litigious to Cavil about their Name and Title, whether it should be *Orders, Offices, or Degrees*. I meant it would be so, either on your side or ours. And I am of the same mind still. Diminish it as you will: That *there have been three such Ranks of Ministers from the times of the Apostles*, I cannot own; because I am not convinced of it. But if there were, I should think that alone would be an Evidence of *Divine Appointment*, unless an Instance could be given of any thing that had been in the Church all along from their times, that was not of *Divine Appointment*.

199. Methinks you are very free in charging me with *Contradictions*: But it would be but civil to take

take my meaning along with you. *Explain* your Terms, and alter them as you please; only avoid striving about Words. And if you will have recourse to the Scripture to support your Fabrick, you must not be angry if I pity you, that you can find there no better Foundation for it. You must excuse me if I can't be easie constantly to repeat the same Things as you do: What you here demand an Account of, is sufficiently clear'd in the first part of my Defence. And as for Mr. *Baxter*, that he was for *Archbishops* Superior to *Bishops* is owned: But I never yet met with any Passages in him, that owned a Superiority of Bishops over meer Presbyters, that had but such a part of the Pastoral Power communicated to them, as they thought good; but much to the contrary.

203.

Of the
BurialOffice.

As to the *Office of Burial*, I pitied you before, and I do so still. I can say no more than I have said. If you will ride out of Town, when according to the Constitution you should be tending a Corps at the Grave, you must answer for it. If the Church has left room for your *Discretion* in the Case, you are free to use it. My Report of the Passage of the Two Archbishops, has good Vouchers: But I don't expect to be able to produce Evidence to your Satisfaction, who can find in your Heart to Cavil, when refer'd even to the *Journal of the Lords*. If I have no other way forfeited my Credit, than in the Matters you point at, I shan't much labour about it. And if I had been in your Case, and could have said no more in answer to the Story, I should rather have wav'd it.

205.

206.

This Office as far as we object against it, is not alter'd since the Canon was made, which requires the using it over every Corps that is brought, upon pain of Suspension. And if your

208.

Dio-

Diocesan will there dispence with you, I have nothing to do to gainsay it. Or if you can *soften* it you may.

Express your *Hopes* of the Deceased as freely as you will, so you don't encourage Presumption: Or leave out as you see occasion; till the needed Discipline is restored: But till then, give me and my Brethren leave to think, since you han't disprov'd it, that this very Office, furnishes us with a considerable Reason for Nonconformity: And I can assure you, (if I may believe the Report of credible Persons as to their own Case) it hath induced some to become Nonconformists, that were bred up in that Church, of which you are so Zealous, tho' at the same time so odd a Defender.

Neither will I contend with you about the *Rule to find out Easter*. I own the Receipt of your Letter about the Matter; but did not I must confess observe that you desired me to take any publick Notice of it. And I have so mislaid it, that I cannot now see, whether you did or no: But I believe it upon your Word. I'm not aware I had any design in waving it: But am sorry I did not give you that piece of Satisfaction, which I had freely done, had I observed, that you desired it. You say *your Assent and Consent is not concerned in it*. But you know the Ejected Ministers had other Apprehensions. At best 'tis a Reflection on your Church to own that she says, *that Easter Day is always, &c.* when it is so but *sometimes*. When you have taken ever so much pains to help People to understand the Rule, if it is so, but *sometimes*, it is not so *always*: And therefore, and upon that Account you'll have a hard Task of it, to secure it from Contempt.

Of the
Rule for
Easter,
213.

214.
215.

Apocryphal Lessons, I am no Friend to. When I represent it as a considerable Objection, that the Rubrick brings in the *Apocryphal Writings* under the name of *Holy Scriptures*, you told me 'twas common in all Speech for the lesser and meaner to go under the Denomination of the greater and better part. I told you, that this savour'd not of that peculiar Respect for the *Holy Scriptures*, as I should have expected from you. In so saying, I was far from insinuating, or so much as thinking, you believ'd the *Apocryphal Writings* divinely Inspir'd; and yet if the lesser and meaner part of the Lessons were not divinely Inspir'd, I think you did not do well at all to vindicate their passing under the same name with the greater and better part of those Lessons, which we all own to be truly Inspir'd. If they were all parts of the *Holy Scriptures*, they might justly all have that name, tho' some deserv'd a higher value than others: But when the *Canonical Writings* are truly inspir'd, and the *Apocryphal*, common Writings, to allow their being stil'd *Holy Scriptures*, is inexcusable. Upon this you are heated, and then charge me with using divers Weights and Measures, and I know not what; and for fear due notice should not be taken of it, you bring it in again, in the twelfth Article of your Index. But, good Sir, what's the matter? Why can't you keep your Temper? I'm as much for regarding the sense of the Law-givers at one time as at another. But if the Church has given her Sense well in her Articles, and express'd her self dangerously in her Rubrick, I don't see that if I disapprove the latter, I use divers Weights and Measures. I am for regarding the Sense of the Church, 'tis true: But not therefore oblig'd to approve of a thing that is really faulty if she has unwarily fallen into it. I think it to be the Sense of the Church, that the Office of

Burial should be used over all; but I don't for that think it ever the more to be approv'd of. And in this case, I know it to be the *Sense of the Church*, that the Canonical Books only are the Holy Scriptures; yet when the Rubrick unhappily brings in the *Apocryphal Writings* under that name, I must beg your excuse from approving of it, or of your vindicating it. And in charging me on that account, you give me a *cast of your Candor*, as you call it, which, if you had pleas'd, you might well have spar'd. If, however, you will doubt, whether there be *any order to read* the Apocryphal Writings, it must be because you find some *Conveniency* in it; for good Reason you have none.

p. 222.

223.

You talk upon this Head as if your Church were infallible: Otherwise you would hardly argue as you do from the *Article* to the *Title of the Calendar*. You had better frankly own a Slip; than argue at so loose a rate for a fallible Church; that is guilty of more gross Mistakes than one. But supposing there be an *Order* (which I never met with any one that contested before) to read the Apocryphal Lessons, and you think *you may safely agree to comply with it*; Give me but leave to be of another mind, and take your way. I am

224.

not for justling out any part of the Canonical Scriptures to make way for them: I am rather for reading those Books over and over again; than leave any room for them: And the danger of tempting People to go too near equalling them with the sacred Scriptures, is with me sufficient Reason, tho' there be no express *Divine Order, Command, or Injunction to the contrary*. If

225.

you can't see a difference between the Church's reading *Apocryphal Books*, i. e. allowing of the private reading of them, and *appointing them to be read in Publick Worshipping Assemblies*; 'twould

226.

be

be a vain thing for me to argue with you. But suppose they were read in the Church in *St. Hierom's Days*, and I by subscribing the *Article* agree, that while and where they were so read, it was for the Ends he mentions, *viz. For Example of Life, and Instruction of Manners, but not for Establishing of Doctrine*, I don't see that I am therefore bound to approve the Practice. I think it has a mischievous tendency to do so. And tho' you are for palliating and diminishing it, yet you must give me leave to apprehend there is a great deal of danger. And for proof I refer you to Bishop *Burnet*, whom I hope you'll allow for a good Author; who at the close of the Sixth Article, speaking of the reading the Apocryphal Books in the Publick Churches, tells us, *That being usually read, they came to be reckon'd among Canonical Scriptures.* This I think is a fair warning.

For my part, I don't doubt but there was as much caution used in many Churches where they were formerly read, as in the Church of *England* at this Day: Nor can you deny but that they were anciently read with this limitation, that *no Doctrine was to be prov'd from them as well as now; or that they were warn'd of unnecessary Passages in them then, as well as lately; and yet Bishop Burnet* tells you, that it is assign'd as a Reason in the 3d Council of *Carthage*, for calling the Apocryphal Books Canonical, *Because they had receiv'd them from their Fathers, as Books that were to be read in Churches.* And therefore I can't see that your security, that such an ill use won't be made of the continuance of such a Practice, is rational or justifiable.

Of the old
Version of
Psalms.
p. 233.

To go on then to *the old Version of the Psalms*; if you can be contented to declare, that it contains nothing contrary to the Word of God, while you don't know but it may, I can't see why you should be angry, that we are backward to join with you in it. This remains a Difficulty after all that either you or Mr. *Hoadly* have suggested to remove it.

234.

We look upon a Practice so venturesome and hazardous, to be contrary to the Word of God. The best *Translations* may indeed, as to *some Passages*, be doubtful, whether agreeable to the Original: But 'tis enough for us to use the best we have; without declaring they have no faults, or are less faulty than they are. Tho' *the Psalter* is no part of the *Common-Prayer*, yet the approving it, is as distinctly express'd in the *Assent* and *Consent*, as the *Common-Prayer* it self. This could not be said

235.

as to *the faulty Translations of the Epistles and Gospels*, for which you refer to Dr. *Burgess's* Paper. If *the new Translation* be best in it self. I think that's Reason sufficient why I should not oblige my self practically to prefer the other before it. If any continue to use old *Hopkins*, I don't know that they oblige themselves to prefer it before a Version they apprehend to be better; which any Man must own unreasonable, unless where the Church is concern'd; which, for what I see, will, with some Men, pass in a little time for a sufficient Plea for the grossest Absurdities.

236.

238.

The *Athanasian Creed* comes next, which I told you we subscrib'd with limitations; and refer'd you to Mr. *Baxter's* sense of the Articles, Printed in 1689. And as long as our Sense was declar'd before our Subscription, I see not why we may not be satisfy'd with it. We expressly excluded the *Appendages* out of our Subscription, and

and therefore your arguing with us about them, is to little purpose.

Had you but given your sense of *Affent* and *Consent*, and the other Terms of Conformity, as you now do, before you Conform'd, and been admitted in that sense, I should not think you would have had any reason to regard the Reflections of any Man. Nor have we any reason to be mov'd in this case by your Insinuation, which has really nothing in it; for we *thoroughly* receive p. 239. the substance of the Creed; nay we receive the Creed it self, *Omnino, i. e. prorsus & plane*, as *Calepine* explains it, without any Dissimulation. What was the true sense and intention of the Church of England in the case, is with me of small account: For if she was so uncharitable, as to condemn the *Greek Church*, far be it from me to imitate her.

And tho' you are bound to regard her sense, who own her Power to Impose; yet so am not I, who know of no such Power. We regard the Articles only as so many Positions, which the State requires us to own and subscribe, if we expect liberty to Dissent from the Publick Constitution without being molested. And so long as in any Passages of these Articles that are dubious, the Justices that are empower'd to take our Subscriptions, will allow us to give in the sense in which we subscribe before hand, we are safe.

With reference to *Confirmation*, I am not aware that my Pen slipt, when I said, You had not taken the *Difficulty*; nor do I own that you have solv'd it. I am as much for *Confirmation* in the substance of it as you; but for laying stress on *Episcopal Confirmation*, as if that were so necessary, as that I might agree, that none be admitted to the Communion, till they be that way Confirm'd, or at least ready and desirous to be

Of Episcopal Confirmation,

243.

Confirm'd in that way ; this is what I can't comply with.

p. 244.

I should be glad you truly were *empower'd to keep off all scandalous Persons from the Communion, and ignorant Persons too* : But that's a quite different thing from admitting none to the Communion till a Bishop Confirm them, or they desire he should do it. This I take to be the sense of your Church : And herein I can by no means agree.

245.

Whether there be reason for *scrupling the Hands of a Bishop* in this case, I shan't dispute : But as long as it may be scrupled by several, who may think (at least) they have good Reason on their side, and therefore can't declare they so much as *desire it* in the way of your Church ; I can't see that your Church allows of their being admitted to Communion ; the contrary to which you should have prov'd, if you would have done any thing to purpose under this Head.

Of the
Canonical
Oath.

246.

Next to the business of *Assent and Consent*, I take the *Oath of Canonical Obedience*, to be the most capital Article of our Debate ; nay, in some respects, I reckon it rather more momentous. What I said of this, in the Tenth Chapter of my *Abridgment*, was taken from Mr. Baxter's *Nonconformity stated*, in Quarto. He asserted it *had reference to the stated Laws or Canons of the Church, and carry'd in it a plain obligation to comply with them, and submit to them, in their stated Practice, where they have not a Dispensation*. This, you say, is a *swearing to the Canons*. I don't remember that I used the Phrase ; 'tis therefore yours, and not either Mr. Baxter's, or mine : I was not fond of it ; but rather than contend, I'll let it pass.

The *only Argument*, you say, I urge in proof of this matter, is taken from the *Notation of the Word*. I thought I had urg'd several other Arguments, and some that I don't see you have answer'd: But I'll let that pass too. I did say, that I should have thought, that *according to the Canons* might have been allow'd as an Explication of the *Word Canonical*. You, on the contrary, will have it, that *Canonical Obedience signifies that Obedience, which the Canons or Laws Ecclesiastical require a Minister to promise or perform*. I don't perceive but this will answer my End well eno'; and therefore I won't contend: Only would desire you to observe, that you bring no better proof for your Sense, than I for Mr. Baxter's, as much as you were displeas'd at that omission.

You tell me *my History of this Oath will turn me to worse than nothing*. You mean you would have it do so; for that is all I understand by those Words. What presently follows, seems to intimate there may be some little fear of the contrary. You say, *Who doubts but when the Councils had made Canons, they insisted on it, and expected to have them observ'd?* I'll assure you I don't doubt it, and am glad you don't. But then, had you consider'd that these Canons were made to be the Rule of that Obedience from the Clergy to their Bishops, which all that were admitted to any Pastoral Charge in the Church, were first to promise, and afterwards to swear, you'd hardly have ask'd, *What is this to the Oath?* Would you think it worth your while to give my short History of this matter a second Perusal; you'd easily observe a gradual Progress, helping to give not a little Light in the case. At first, a promise of following the Rules of Scripture in the Management of the Pastoral Care was sufficient; and all that was requir'd of Ministers:

Afterwards they must subscribe several *Confessions of Faith*, as well as make that Promise. But neither would this do long; for, to secure the observance of *Ecclesiastical Discipline*, according to the *Canons* of divers Councils, it was at length insisted on by the Bishops, that the Body of their Clergy, should by promise bind themselves to observe them: And as their Lordships became in process of time, bound by an Oath reverently to regard the Mandates of their *Metropolitans*, (as they also themselves were to those of His Holiness of *Rome*) so they bound their Clergy, in the same manner, to the same regard to them; but still within the compass of the *Canons*, that were taken for the fix'd Rule of Discipline. This I think I have fairly prov'd. And if so, their Promise and their Oath look'd the same way. When I mention'd the Eleventh Council of *Toledo*, Anno 675, which enjoins, that *whosoever is admitted into Ecclesiastical Orders, should bind himself, by Writing under his Hand, in the Sincerity of his Heart, not to contradict the Canonical Rules; and in all things to give due Honour and Obedience to his Ecclesiastical Superiors*; you tell me, *it does not come home*. No! That's strange! What's the matter? Why you give this as the reason, that *your Constitution does not require your Subscription to the Canons*. That's very true: But it requires an *Oath of Canonical Obedience*, of which Bishop *Stillingfleet* tells us, this is the first Instance: And I hope you won't contradict him, which you afterwards represent as such a Crime in me. When I a little after referr'd you to *Baronius* for the Form of *Boniface's* Oath to the Pope, you tell me, *I do not say, whether it had any reference to the Canons or no*. I should have thought you had time enough to have consulted *Baronius* about it while you were at *London*: But if it may be any satisfaction

p. 250:

267.

faction to you, I now tell you, that *Boniface* not only swore an observance of the Canons, but *that he would not so much as have any Converse or Communion with such Prelates as acted against the ancient Decrees of the holy Fathers.* The Instances I give you of several succeeding Councils, who manifested such a concern, that the Clergy should obey their Bishops according to the Canons, don't fall short of the former, but continue the train, and still evidence thus much to any Man that will impartially consider them, that the bringing the Clergy to obey the Canons, was the drift of the Consultations of the Bishops in those Days, and the aim of the several Bonds and Tyes they brought them under.

And as for that of the Council of *Chalons*, An. 815, which forbids, *that any should swear to do nothing against the Canons, and to be obedient to the Bishop that ordains them;* it is in my Apprehension very much to the purpose. But here you have a pleasant Fancy. You distinguish between *swearing to do nothing against the Canons, and swearing to be obedient to the Bishop.* But the Distinction is yours, not the Council's. This is plain by what follows. For it is immediately added, *which Oath, because it is dangerous, we with one consent forbid all to have any concern in.* So that it was one and the same Oath that bound to both, which was forbidden by that Council. And for what reason you should use a multiplying Distinction, I cannot imagine. When you will have it, *that subscribing or swearing to the Canons is one thing, and swearing Obedience to the Bishops and* P. 251.
Metropolitans, is another thing, you make a Distinction without a Difference. In the Oath to the Pope in the Pontifical, *Obedience to His Holiness is the thing sworn:* And the *Orders and Appointments of the holy Fathers,* in conjunction
Y 3 with

with the *Mandates Apostolical* that should proceed from the *Holy See*, are the Rules of that Obedience.

And tho' in the Oath that is taken by the Bishops to the Archbishops in the Church of *England*, the *Canons* are not mention'd, yet they are the Rules of the Obedience that is sworn to them, which is what I aim at. And therefore I think, according to the *Rule of Proportion*, (which in this case appears to me a considerable Argument, not easily to be overthrown) when the inferior Clergy swear to yield true and canonical Obedience to their Bishops, the Canons must pass for the Rules and Measures of the Obedience sworn. 'Tis now limited indeed to things lawful and honest; and by being so limited, it shuts out Popery: And yet this Oath was at first founded on the *Papacy*, and design'd to support it: And it leaves a Door still open to too many remaining Disorders among us. Upon the whole, tho' I don't doubt but you would have been glad you could have made it out, that my History militates against my self in this matter, yet you have reserv'd your proof of it till hereafter.

But you farther tell me, *I have alter'd the state of the Question, and given quite another turn to things.* You had as good have said plainly, you were at a loss about the matter, for it comes much to one. I had from Mr. *Baxter*, in my Tenth Chapter, represented the Canons as the Rule and Measure of the Obedience sworn. A standing and a fixed Measure not to be vary'd, as far as the things required could not be prov'd any other than lawful and honest. And I have added, that it was hard to suppose that the Church of *England* Representative, should in her Canons require, any other things than such as were lawful and honest. By this you intimate, I

hop'd to represent you as perjur'd. Your Candor, good Sir! God knows my Heart, I never had such a Thought. Neither is the *Tyde turn'd*. It runs the same way as before. Only when I was particularly opening my own Sense, which I had not done before, I was making you all the allowance you could reasonably desire in the case, and which I thought I should my self desire, if in your case: And for my pains you tell me, *I contradict my self, and am incoherent, inconsistent, and immethodical*, and I know not what. While, I must confess, I hop'd my frankness would have had another sort of return.

Well, however, I don't wish any thing on this Head unsaid. I stand to my Concessions, and you have free liberty to make your best of them. I doubt you'll be hamper'd enough after all. Thinking with my self what I should desire might be yielded me, had I before I had duly consider'd it, taken this *Oath of Canonical Obedience*, I could only pitch on two things. I thought I could not fairly desire any more, than that it should be allow'd me, that my Oath did not straitly, and in the sight of God, oblige me to obey such Canons as upon farther Consideration I could not heartily approve, till I was call'd on by the Bishop; or even then such Canons, my obedience to which, tho' it was requir'd of me, I could not, upon strict search, find to be *lawful and honest*. And accordingly, I offer'd you these Concessions for your relief. And you throw them back in my Face with disdain: And make a woful pother, for want of a plain Distinction between the *real obliging force of an Oath in the sight of God*, and the *intention of Man to bind us by it*. An Oath can never really oblige any Man to a thing that is not *lawful and honest*. And yet I hope 'tis no impossible thing, but either you or I may unwarily

take an Oath, by which we may in general, bind our selves to such Measures, as strictly pursued, might lead us into what is neither *lawful* nor *honest*.

To suppose our Oath in any such case to retain a binding force, is to imagine that God obliges us to what would be a sinful violation of his Law; which is a gross Absurdity. A Man never violates an Oath, in refusing an unlawful and dishonest thing. He may be charg'd with it indeed, but 'tis groundlessly. A Man can't divest himself so far in this respect of *his Judgment of Discretion*, as not to be accountable to God, if he should out of a pretended regard to an Oath, do an unlawful and dishonest thing. But where Men pretend to fix particular Measures of Obedience for others, in which they are to bind themselves by general Oaths; there it is not an un-supposable case, there may, upon a narrow inspection, be some Particulars found, that are not *lawful and honest*; as to which, tho' Man it may be, won't make allowance, yet God will: This Consideration saves you from *Perjury*, Sir, tho' not from Imprudence, in coming under an ensnaring Bond.

257. In the case of the *Canonical Oath*, I don't lay my stress, when I say, you are not chargeable with violating it, upon your *suffering the Penalty*, when you break any particular Canons: No, no, *suffering the Penalty* won't free from the binding force of an Oath, the design of which was to oblige to Obedience: But I lay my stress here, that no Oath can oblige us to what we are convinced is not *lawful and honest*. And this has been my sense, as to this Oath in particular, ever since I have consider'd it.

I cannot from hence see the least occasion I have to *recall that part my Tenth Chapter*, where this Oath is considered : Nor can I discern that I have at all *contradicted my Allowances*, though you are pleas'd to charge me with it. You need search for no *Mystery* in the matter, for the thing is plain, if you are but willing to see it ; without blinding your self with a Fancy, that That will *prejudice People against your Ministry*, which was design'd to convince you, of an Unwariness, which is a thousand fold more safely own'd than justify'd. What follows I think will clear the matter. p. 258.

Tho', had I taken the *Canonical Oath*, as you have done, I should not think my self bound in Conscience to comply with several of the *Canons* that are exceptionable, till I was call'd upon by the Bishop ; yet still I think I have good reason, while I am free, to be loth to bind my self by an Oath to the constant use even of such a thing as the *Surplice*, when the Bishop should call upon me to it. And yet you injure me, when you intimate, *I would have People think, that if you have omitted the Surplice, you have broken an Oath.* No, Sir, if you really dislike it, I blame you not, tho' you do omit it, if the Bishop never call'd upon you to obey the *Canon* : But if he should, I must leave you to shift for your self. Here is no *Pestilence flying in the dark* ; I rather suspect a fit of the Vapours, when this dropt from you. 259.

Again, Though I own your Oath can't in the Sight of God oblige you, to what you are convinced is not Lawful and Honest, yet I must own that in taking that Oath, I think you have *made such a general Promise, as if it should be kept, in all the particular Canons in which your Bishop has Power to urge it upon you, would draw* 260.

draw you into Sin. You are liable to be cited into the Ecclesiastical Courts, and punished for disobeying any Canon, after being called on by the Bishop: And yet I'll own, before God and your own Conscience, *you are not obliged, unless you see the Things to be Lawful.* This is so obvious, that I cannot but wonder you did not take Notice of it. Once more I agree, that supposing, when you are called upon to do things unlawful or dishonest, you quit your Livings rather than comply, you are not justly chargeable with violating your Oaths. Yet I think in such a Case, you'd run the Hazard of being charged with a Breach of your Oath, by your Superiors, who thought they had you fast and sure: And even this grates upon a tender spirited Man, that he should be charged with breaking an Oath, which he cannot safely keep; and which he must renounce as it is press'd hard on him, before he can have Peace. I know of no Ambiguity in this Matter at all, or the least Appearance, of Contrariety, to one that is free and willing to understand. For though your Oath really binds you to nothing but what is Lawful and Honest, yet should the time ever come when the Bishop of your Diocess, should urge a Canon upon you by vertue of your Oath, which required what you was convinced was unlawful and dishonest, I don't much Question, but it would grate upon you if you thereupon quitted your Living, to be charged with the Breach of your Oath: And though your Conscience might be satisfied, you'd be apt to think that an unhappy Reflection; and perhaps you might also be troubled, that you should have exposed your self to such a Hardship by taking such an Oath. At least I can safely say it would be thus with me, in such a Case.

I'm sorry you should so strangely mistake me in this Case. I never desired to disturb your *Rest*. I put you not upon *Disputing*; but you are fond of it; and how can I help it? I am only sorry you should dispute so eagerly; and upon such a Bottom as tends to obstruct that Reformation, of which I yet know you are really desirous,

Well but it seems to all my other Crimes, I have added that of *Heedlessness*. *My way of Writing is heedless at least*. I'm sorry for it. But all I can say is, when I see my Faults, I'll heedfully correct them. But on the other side, when a Man desires to spy Faults, he commonly looks through a multiplying Glass; and is apt to swell and magnify them, beyond all bounds. I think verily no Man, that has written these many Years, had more need to be heedful than I, who have so many lying upon the catch for me: And I expect little Mercy from them.

262¹

Hitherto however, I have come off pretty well: And possibly may be able to hold out longer than is thought for, in Defence of a Cause, which appears to me the more justifiable, the more I study it. But what is the great Instance of my Heedlessness? Why that *I make this Oath a Cause of the Nonconformity of the Ejected Ministers, which not one of them thought of in many Years after*. But sure you forget your self strangely. I not only undertake in my Tenth Chapter, to shew upon what Grounds the Ejected Ministers became *Nonconformists*; but what Pleas they used to vindicate their Practise. And this having been a Plea made use of by them, a Plea on which some laid great Stress, it had been foolish in me to omit it, especially when I my self look upon it very strong and cogent. Mr. *Baxter* indeed urged it the most strenuously.

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ly. And would a worthy Person (yet living) allow me, I could give some Account how he came to urge it so warmly in the Book referred to. But the attempting to reconcile his *Nonconformity stated*, with his *Directory*, is meer diverting from the Argument, in which I won't pursue you. Let who will urge it, I think the Plea taken from this Oath strong.

p. 266.

As for the *Canons* being confirmed by Parliament, which you plead for from 25 *Hen. 8. c. 19.* You must give me still leave to differ from you. And represent my Reason as *strange* as you will, with me 'tis strong. For it a Statute of *Henry the Eight*, confirms the *Canons* of 1603. upon being ratified by the King, than the after Consent of Parliament, to ratify such *Canons* is needless. Whereas our best Lawyers generally assert, that *Canons* ought to be confirmed by Parliament after they are made, before they have any Force upon the Subject : And if you Consult the *Journals of the House of Commons*, that sate when the *Canons* were made, (which I have had the favour of perusing) you'll find the Matter abundantly clear'd. To help my Reason in the Case, I have read again and again, and I must confess am so dull, as that I cannot find, that when it is declared, that the *Convocation* shall not enact any

267.

See *Bagshaw's Argument concerning the Canons.*

Constitutions or Ordinances without the King's Assent; it necessarily follows, that the *Constitutions or Ordinances that have the King's Assent, are allowed or confirmed.*

To Bishop *Stillingfleet* I in this Case oppose that great Lawyer Serjeant *Maynard*, who in a Speech in the House of Lords concerning the *Canons* declared, that that Clause in

25 H. 8. c. 19. that the Clergy shall not make Canons without the King's leave, did not imply that by the King's leave alone they might make them, without the Consent of the Commons in Parliament. And to King James's Letters Patents that confirmed the Canons of 1603. I desire

you will add the Consideration of an Address of the House of Commons to that King in 1604. in which there is this Passage. *Your Majesty should be misinformed, if any Man should deliver, that the Kings of England have an absolute Power in themselves, either to alter Religion, (which God defend, should be in the Power of any mortal Man whatsoever) or to make any Laws concerning the same, otherwise than as in temporal Causes by Consent of Parliament.* We may from hence naturally be led to apprehend, that though King James had Lawyers to tell him what was Law, yet they were ready to put their Representations into that Dress, which they apprehended would be most pleasing to him, and most for the Advancement of the Prerogative.

That the Oath of Abjuration is Parallel to the Oath of Canonical Obedience, I think I have sufficiently disproved. I am by that Oath heartily to contribute in my Sphere to the Defence and Support of the Queen's Person, Crown and Dignity, under the Direction of the Law of the Land. You add, that in like manner you by the Oath we are upon, heartily own the Authority and Jurisdiction of the Bishop of the Diocese, under the Direction of the Canons of the Church. Very well: But in the former Case, I am bound only to obey those Laws, as really contribute to the Defence and Support of the

Bishop Burnet says, *The Book of Canons was ratified only by the Regal Authority.* Reflections on a Book concerning the Rights of an English Convocation, pag. 7.

268.

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- Person, Crown, and Dignity of my Queen : In the latter, you are bound to take Direction from your Bishop, not only as to Canons that really tend to support his Authority and Jurisdiction, but as to Canons that relate to the minutest Matters ; nay even those most liable to Exception. And though it's true you may Answer it to God in point of Conscience, if you refuse to obey when you are put upon things you are not satisfied are Lawful and Honest ; yet you are liable to the Law if you refuse Obedience when called upon, in any thing which the Canons have already determined. This alone, were there no more, is with me a mighty difference. Though you assert the contrary; yet you must give me leave to say it again, *who-*
271. *ever breaks any Canon, when by his Bishop he is called upon to keep it, though in the most trifling matter, will according to Law, be chargeable with violating his Obedience, whatever he is in the Sight of God. Nor do I apprehend that any Bishop or Civilian in England, will say any thing to the contrary. And you may make Absurdities at any time in abundance at pleasure at the same rate, as you make me guilty of Absurdities upon this Head ; though the best of it is, that you prove nothing but that your Eager-ness draws you into one Mistake after another. You tell me, 'tis tedious to say the same Things over again : For my part, I only wonder you han't found it sooner.*
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274. But good Sir, is there no end of your Mistakes ? Did I ever give it as my Sense, that you were obliged to obey all the Canons, whether Comanded or no ? I never so much as thought it : Nor I believe Mr. Baxter neither, If I never said it, how do I now contradict my
275.
276. self ? If I did not so distinctly express your being

ing called upon in the Tenth Chapter, as you p. 277. would have desired, I should have thought it had required but a small Degree of Candour, to suppose it understood, when I so distinctly expressed it in my Defence. And as fond as you represent me of heaping one Absurdity upon another, I 278. should most heartily rejoice, if you could prove, 279. that as to Church-Government and Discipline, the Popish Foundation was evidently rased and destroyed by the English Constitution, and not the Constitution built upon it.

But as to the Limitation in your Oath, to things *Lawful and Honest*, I entirely stand to what I have said. You objected, I made that Limitation needless. To this I gave you a two-fold Answer according to two different Views: And as forward as you are in other Cases to distinguish without a Difference, yet here you cannot see a *Difference* without supposing a *Contradiction*; and then calling it in your most obliging manner, my *usual Custom*. Whereas if you could but lay aside Prejudice, the Thing is plain enough. The Limitation either refers to *future Commands*, by which the Obedience sworn may be required to be regulated: Or to *Canons already in force*, against which there is just Objection. Some have thought it was to be confined to *future Commands*: That is to say, that such as took the Oath, oblig'd themselves, in any particulars not mentioned in the Canons to obey the Bishop, provided it were *Lawful and Honest*: But that as for the Canons, that had been made since the Reformation, they were in course to be complied with, by such as fell in with the Constitution.

I don't this way make the Oath consist of two 280. Parts; to obey the Canons already made without any Limitation; and to obey future Commands with the Limitation.

Limitation of Lawful and Honest : But I fall in with you, *That the Limitation does belong to all the Obedience that is sworn by the Oath* : Only I take it for granted, that the *Canons* of the Reformed *Church of England*, are such as a Man may suppose comprehended within the Limitation of Things *Lawful and Honest*. And I think verily I should have little heart to defend the Church; while I found reason to represent that as an unreasonable Concession ; which is one of the greatest Reflections upon the Church imaginable.

However, this first Answer I fear'd might bear too hard on you, and therefore for your sake, and not for my own, I found out another, which makes the Matter the freer of Difficulty on your side. 'Tis this ; that the Limitation of *Lawful and Honest* in the Oath, refers to *Canons already in force*, against which there is just Objection ; which it was designed to exclude. And so I verily believe it was designed to satisfy Persons at the first, that it was not intended by this Oath to bind their Consciences to all the Parts of the *Canon Law*, or any part of it that was sinful : And the same way since even the Reformed *Church of England* has many *Canons* and some of them exceptionable, it may now be used as a *salvo* to Conscience. And by yielding this, I think I bid fair for obliging you.

But when I by this Limitation represent *Popish Canons* as excluded from being binding, you tell me I forget, that *the Supposition in the Act*, of not being contrary to the *Laws and Statutes* of this Realm, *precludes such Antient Canons as are unlawful and dishonest*. But I doubt, not all of them. I durst undertake to select many Rules in the *Canon Law*, that should not be contrary to the *Statutes* of this Realm, that such a Man as you would hardly think it *Lawful and*

Honest

Honest to comply with. As for the story of Bishop *Barlow*, which I bring from Mr. *Shepherd*, I find it does not affect you as I apprehended, because you were not in the Diocess till his Death: But I pretend to get more by it than this, that p. 282.
a Good Man once spake hastily and unadvisedly with 283.
his Lips: I think I may from it gather thus much at least, that by taking this Oath, you give Advantage for pressing you many times against your Conscience; and run the Hazard of being charged with Perjury by Man for Non-compliance, even though you may be able to clear your self in the Sight of God. And this I think verily is a Hardship not to be boasted of.

As to the particular *Canons* referred to, many 284.
Words are not necessary. You charge me with 285.
my *Reflections* on you; but you have far cut-done me. If there be such *Canons* made by the Protestant *Church of England*, as are unlawful and dishonest; I cannot see why I might not warrantably take notice of it. 'Tis not I that thereby expose you to the *Dissenters*, 'tis you that expose your self by seeking to palliate them. On the other Hand, if you do neglect such *Canons*, as you know your *Diocesan* intends to oblige you strictly to observe, (which whether you do or no, be it with your self) I leave you to him, to give you a Name: I give you none. If he agrees, that the *excommunicating Canons* don't concern you, I am contented. Or if you will when called on, *excommunicate the Deprav- 289.*
ers of the Liturgy, Articles, &c. I cannot help it. You must answer for it to God. I agree with you, *some Canons are better than others*: And yet many of them are so bad, that I should be very uneasy to take an Oath, by which I should cherish in any Man an Opinion, that it was in his Power to oblige me to Compliance with them: If you had not seen the Bishop of *London's Episcopalia,*
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copalia, I should think you might have given it a look, when I referred to it in the Case, without pretending to explain his meaning unsight and unseen, which is a peculiar way of answering.

p. 291. If you will reject such as refuse to kneel at the Lord's Supper, be it with your self. If you are not obliged to exhibit the Names of Non-communicants to the Bishop, I am satisfied you should be at Liberty. And if you will vindicate the Canon for keeping off Strangers from being Communicants, what is it to me? Baptize all the Children in your Parish, if you think good. Wear your Surplice if you please not only in Divine Service, but upon all other Occasions. But then be so Candid, as to suppose that your Brethren, that are not satisfied with such things as these, may at least seem to themselves to have good reason to refuse Compliance with them.

292.
293.

As to *Private Fasts*, I am not aware that what I said discovered any Gall; I only pointed you to what you over-looked. The Canon about *Fasts* mentions *Prophecies* or *Prophecyings*, that were in those Days usual. And it as much, forbids the one as the other: And *Week-Day-Lectures*, (without a particular Licence from the Bishop) as either. I apprehended you could not approve this; and thence was my *Surprize*. You plainly own now you don't approve it; and therefore I think you might have spared your Gall till there were more occasion for it. But as angry with you as you suppose me, I'll freely grant you any thing you can reasonably desire.

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The *Ecclesiastical Courts* finish the Debate. You tell me you are not in so much danger of being hamper'd by them as I pretend. I profess, I'm very glad to hear it: I wish you may never have occasion to change your Mind. I have consulted some able Lawyers, about that which you call

297.

my

my bold Assertion; viz. That a Minister is liable to an Action for refusing to give the Sacrament to the most scandalous Person, when it is necessary to qualify him for an Office. They tell me, that there lies an Action of Damage at Common-Law in such a Case, for depriving a Man of the necessary Qualification for his Office. And that proving the Man *Scandalous* won't bring the Minister off at Common-Law, though it may satisfy his Conscience. And though you are pleased to assure me, that the Bishop cannot suspend a Minister for denying the Lord's Supper to a Scandalous Person, and to confirm your Assertion from Mr. Bennet, yet we have so many Instances to the contrary, where Ministers have been suspended by Bishops on that Account, that I cannot agree with you, till I have some Instance of a Bishop Animadverted on, for proceeding in such a Case *Illegally and Arbitrarily* as Mr. Bennet expresses it. But supposing you could defend your self in such a Case from any Damage from your Bishop, (which is to me still dubious) it doth not therefore follow, that you could defend your self, at Common-Law, from an Action of Damage; brought against you by a Person, whom you had kept out of his Office, by denying him the Communion, because he was Scandalous in his Morals; which is the thing referred to in that Assertion of mine, which you represent as so very bold.

You farther tell me, *If any Danger should happen of being hampered in the Ecclesiastical Courts, in performance of your Duty, yet you are never the worse.* Very well! If you will run into Danger, I grant 'tis to your self. For my part, I'll never plead for a Constitution that exposes a Conscientious Minister to Hardships, for his being Conscientious. If you will, and when you have done,

p. 300.

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will charge all the Danger on the *faulty Administration, malicious Prosecutions, or imprudent Carriage* of the Ministers concerned, reap the Comfort of it, say I: But were all of your Mind, I don't see what hope, we could have left us of any farther Reformation, of which you sometimes appear so desirous. I was far from *quibbling* (I leave that to others) when I mentioned, *the Advantage of these Courts to urge you with your Oath, when you could not in Conscience comply with them.* I neither meant, nor hop'd others would understand me that you were then *chargeable with the breach of your Oath* before God: But I thought it an Unhappines to give them that Advantage, and I do so still. 'Tis enough if we *bear Scoffs* when they cannot be avoided: I can't see we are obliged to expose our selves to them when we may escape them.

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You charge me with *egregiously slandering* you, in applying to you *Mr. Hoadly's Words*: But good Sir, next time, *bring softer Words, or better Proof,* or I doubt you'll betray your Cause. I won't retaliate, and tell you you have *slandered* me, in what you apply to me, in the close from *Mr. Baxter,* though I think your Admonition Groundless. I own you a *Worthy Minister of Christ*: And I pray God you may be more and more useful. Convince me of *reproaching you,* and I'll make you all the Reparation that is in my Power. I do nothing to *turn away the Hearts of the People from your Doctrine*; I only aim at promoting as far as in me lies that farther Reformation, which to the best of my Judgment, your Method obstructs, while yet I doubt not but you heartily desire it. *Ignorant, peevish, contentious Zeal* I abhor: And have been cautious of imitating you in *Words of Obloquy,* through a dread of the Consequences. My Conscience bears me witness

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308.

ness, 'tis my sincere Endeavour to avoid those carnal Courses, as tend to make or harden Carnal Professors in their dividing Methods. And I warn all I have to do with, both against *Wrangling*, and against *Partiality*. What then remains but that you and I, since we are not in these things likely to agree, agree together to differ Amicably, and in our several Ways set our selves to answer the great Ends of Religion, to spread true Christian Knowledge, and promote Love and Unity, Holiness of Life, and a farther Ecclesiastical Reformation, in hopes of meeting and conversing together without any jarrings or clashings, in that Blessed State of Rest and Peace that is above. To this I hope after all your Heat, you will not be backward to say, *Amen*. And herein you may depend on the Hearty Concurrence, of,

Sir,

Your Unworthy Brother,

E. CALAMY.

Postscript. That you mayn't think you are a much less peculiar *Writer* than my self, you may be pleased at your Leisure to peruse the following *INDEX*.

A N

INDEX

O F S O M E

Peculiarities in Mr. Ollyffe's manner of Writing in this Controversie. The Figures, for the most part, note the Pages of his Two Books; which I take to be fairer, than for him to refer his Readers to my Words, in his Books, rather than in my own.

I. **H**E makes tragical Complaints with very little Reason, *Epist. Ded. p. 2:* He complains of being aggriev'd, by one that design'd him nothing but Respect, *1 Def. p. 84.* He complains of my putting Words into the Mouths of Deists, Socinians, and other blasphemous Adversaries, by bringing Objections against such Corruptions as it is a shame to the Church not to have rectify'd long since.

In the mean time, he passes lightly by such things, as he has abundant reason to complain of. *As the Abuses in the case of Godfathers, 1 Def. p. 38, 39.* The obligation that lies on Ministers to present Non-communicants to the Bishop, that they may be prosecuted, *Ib. p. 105.* And to give an account to him of all that he debar's from Communion,

p. 110. *And the tediousness, vexationness, and expensiveness of Prosecutions in the Ecclesiastical Courts, &c.* p. 133.

II. He discovers a dislike of the Impositions. *Disclaims a stiff adherence to the things in debate,* Ep. Ded. p. 4. *Declares, that as he had no hand in the Impositions, so he has no heart nor will to the continuance of them,* 1 Def. p. 2.

And yet he stily endeavours to uphold them; tells us, *the Subscription may be fairly vindicated,* 1 Def. p. 19. *He vindicates Assenting and Consenting at large,* 1 Def. p. 21. &c. and 2 Def. p. 103. *He insinuates, that the Protestant Churches are generally agreed in such Godfathers and Godmothers as are requir'd in the Church of England, tho' they really know nothing of them,* 1 Def. p. 32. 2 Def. p. 141. *He vindicates the sign of the Cross in Baptism,* 1 Def. p. 44. 2 Def. p. 173. *And the promiscuous use of the Office for Burial,* 1 Def. p. 67. *He pleads for the Apocryphal Lessons,* 1 Def. p. 73. 2 Def. p. 219. *He declares, that he can't part with Episcopal Confirmation, as necessary to qualifie for the Holy Communion,* 1 Def. p. 82. *He Vindicates Canon xxvii. that excludes all but Kneelers from the Communion,* Ib. p. 82. and *Can. 28. That excludes Communicants from other Parishes,* Ib. p. 100. and *Can. 72. That debars Ministers from keeping private Fasts,* Ib. p. 103. *And he says, that in the Church of England, no part of the Pastoral Power is taken from Ministers, that Christ hath given them,* Ib. p. 109.

Thus, tho' he earnestly declares for Reformation, and says, he most passionately longs, and earnestly wishes for healing Concessions, Ep. Ded. p. 5. And that he longs for Alterations, 1 Def. p. 32. He yet takes the direct Method to obstruct the Reformation he desires, by pleading for the very things that are to be Reform'd. When he's told

of this, he's wonderful angry; and says, the taking notice of it, is a *misrepresenting him to the Church*, 2 Def. p. 18. And to divert the Scent, he throws the blame upon his Neighbour; and charges me with *contributing to the perpetuating our Divisions*, Pref. to Part 2. p. 9 because I freely declare against the things that are to be alter'd; which yet in all probability never would be alter'd, if they were acquiesced in, by those that longed for an *Averation*.

III. He has some other special Arts that deserve particular Notice. Thus, to convince all that he aims only at *Self-defence*, he can lay aside all consideration of *Re ordination*, 1 Def. p. 4. And yet in the same Volume he can treat of it more distinctly than of any thing else. He can, by a proper Accent on his Words, express the degree of his hopes concerning the Persons he *Interrs*, 1 Def. p. 67. Nay he can turn the most dreadful of Judgments, (as the cutting off an impenitent Sinner in the height of his Wickedness) into a great Mercy, *Ibid.* p. 69. He can, when it is for his purpose, make me appear to begin the Contest about *Conformity and Non-conformity* anew, when the *Toleration* had laid all this matter asleep, Pref. to Part 2. p. 11. Tho' to others it is notorious, that more has been written against the Dissenters since then, than at any time before. The very same things shall in him be represented as according to the form of Law prescribed, which in others shall be acting according to their own Fancies, and marks of Contempt, 2 Def. p. 23. Nay, he can vehemently run down the Sense of the ejected Ministers, about Assent and Consent, and the other Terms of Conformity, (as he does through his whole Book) and yet have nothing to do with them in the matter, 2 Def. p. 129.

These are such Arts as should not be overlook'd.

IV. He

IV. He charges me with Mistakes, where all the Mistake there is, is evidently of his own side. Thus he represents it as a *Mistake, that Ministers are obliged to Baptize all Comers*, 1 Def. p. 26. tho' it is the plain Language of Canon 68. He charges me with *mistaking Bishop Morley*, 2 Def. p. 187. whereas I have prov'd the Mistake his own, as appears from Page 330 of this Volume. And nothing will serve him, but I must be *so grossly mistaken as to the Oath of Canonical Obedience, as to allow what I before denied, and then again contradict my own allowances*, Index Art. 17. whereas he that peruses P. 345, 346. of this my Third Part, will find, that for want of observation, he quite mistakes me, both as to what I *allow*, and what I *deny*.

V. He is in other cases very guilty of the things of which he falsely accuses his Neighbour. Thus he charges me with *writing loosely, hand over head, and taking things upon trust, without ever examining them*, 1 Def. p. 79. when he himself in a bearing Point, that the stress of the Cause depends upon, instead of examining the *Journal of the Lords*, which he was referred to as a decisive Evidence, comes with any Suppositions that offer, by which he may avoid being set right, in what he has *taken upon trust, viz. That the Declaration of Assent and Consent referred to Use only*; as appears, 2 Def. p. 105. &c. And at another time, he argues with me from Mr. *Humphreys*, whose Book, that I referred him to, he had *never examined*, 2 Def. p. 44. And at another time, he will explain the meaning of the *Bishop of London*, in his *Episcopalia*, tho' he owns he *never saw the Book*, ib. p. 290.

Again, he charges me with using divers *Weights and Measures*, Index Art. 12. forgetting how guilty he is himself, when he represents our sense
of

of his Practice as designed to render *him and his Brethren odious*, while he can freely inveigh against the Sense and Practice of the ejected Ministers, and yet have a *profound Respect* for them: And when he will apply to me Passages out of Mr. Baxter's *Cure of Church Divisions*, and think it very allowable, tho' I have no concern in them; and yet will represent my applying to him certain Passages out of Mr. Hoadly, in which he was much more concerned, as a *groundless and egregious Slander*, 2 Def. p. 306, 307.

Once more, (for it would be an endless Task to mention all Particulars) he charges me with *unkindly using many Personal Reflections, and some Scurrilous ones*, Index Art. 7. Forgetting, I suppose, what sort of Language himself hath used, when he tells me, *he cannot think that I believe my self*, 1 Def. p. 35. *That I have changed and wrested Words, that I might speak against them*, 1 Def. p. 50. *That I have condemned my own Act and Deed, that I might accuse him and his Brethren*, 1 Def. p. 79. *That I have put Words into the Mouths of Deists, Socinians, and other blasphemous Adversaries of all Religion*, 1 Def. p. 84. *That I have contributed to the perpetuating our Divisions*, Pref. to 2 Def. p. 9. *That I have heap'd together all the most odious Representations of Conformity, and with all the Spirit and Vigour I could, endeavoured to render it vile in the sight of all, by oblique and artful Innuendo's*, Ibid. p. 11. And, *That the most invidious Adversaries could not well charge them with blacker Crimes*, 2 Def. p. 4. *That I have defended the highest Notion that ever was vented by the most violent High-Flyers, that have wrote among the Dissenters of any Denomination*, Ibid. p. 76. *That I am an egregious Slanderer*, Ibid. p. 306. *That I expose them to their Governors as Dissemblers with them, or worse*, Ibid. p. 285. Nay, in short, he intimates

mates, that I have been doing the Devil's Work,
i Def. p. 84.

VI. He wrests the Scriptures; in favour of Notions they were never design'd to support. Thus he brings several Passages of Holy Writ to vindicate *the Regeneration of all Baptized Infants*, i Def. p. 28, 29. And, which is yet worse, he attempts to prove from thence, that *That may be asserted to be ALWAYS true, which is only true SOME-TIMES*, Ibid. p. 71.

VII. He oft prevaricates, in order to the evading the force of an Argument that pinches him. Thus being press'd about *Baptizing without Godfathers*, he pleads he's at liberty to use the Form for private Baptism: And when told that *That supposes Sicknes or danger of Death*; he says, *There is not a word of Sicknes in the Rubrick*, i Def. p. 41. tho' the Rubrick expressly says, *In case the Child live, &c.* which is equivalent. And when he's told, *That the Canon represents the Sign of the Cross as signifying the Merits of the Death of Christ*, he exclaims most bitterly, and talks of being moved with Indignation; because, forsooth, two things referred to in that Canon, are *not in the same Page*, i Def. p. 48. And when he's pinched about *reading the Burial Office over a notoriously wicked Person*, he talks of *taking his Horse, and riding out of Town*, i Def. p. 65.

VIII. He trifles in the most serious Matters; *Calling me solemnly to Repentance*, where there was not the least occasion for it, i Def. p. 44. *and admonishing me as a Brother in the Lord to consider whose Work I had been doing*, i Def. p. 84. when I had been only declaring against Ecclesiastical Corruptions.

IX. He fastens heavy Imputations on many other innocent Persons. Thus, he charges *the Ignorance many live in touching the Nature of Sacraments*,

craments, nay and the Socinian Error, that dwindles Sacraments to meer Signs, upon the apprehension of such as look upon the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, to be of a Sacramental nature, 1 Def. p. 45.

X. He can differ from the common sense of his Church, and yet be in the right. As about omitting Godfathers, and yielding to private Baptisms, and admitting to the Lord's Supper without Kneeling, &c. in compliance with the Scrupulous: But for me to tell him of this, must be disingenuous, 2 Def. p. 18. and a design to expose him; nay, a malicious design, 2 Def. p. 23. and a putting his Governors in mind to punish him. At least it seems it would be so, if his wonderful Charity did not bring me off.

XI. He sets down Histories and Authorities, that prove

What I had never deny'd; as, that Persons may be run upon Inconveniencies by the indiscreet Zeal of some of their Friends, 2 Def. p. 22. That wise Persons may labour under Prejudices, 2 Def. p. 16, 17. That Popish Priests may be Reordained, 2 Def. p. 43. That it may in some cases be lawful to do things that are unlawfully commanded, 2 Def. p. 73, 74, 75.

The contrary to what he produces them for. As in Bishop Morley's case, 2 Def. p. 188. compar'd with Page 330. of this Volume.

XII. He groundlessly insinuates what he dares not assert, viz. That the Presbyterians hindred the Comprehension in 1689. 2 Def. p. 29. And also what he never goes about to prove, viz. That Conformity is now the same in all Points, (except the Declaration of Assent and Consent) as it was in the Days of the Conforming Puritans, save only wherein it is granted to be alter'd for the better, 2 Def. p. 11, 12.

XIII. He

XIII. He confidently affirms things contrary to plain Evidence. As that Mr. *Humphreys* is for him, as to the receiving Episcopal Ordination, after being Ordained by Presbyters, without nullifying the past Ordination, as things have stood since the Act for Uniformity, 2 Def. p. 44, 45. *That I am professedly gone off from the Principles of the old Nonconformists, both before the Wars and since; and have given up the whole Cause of the Ejected Ministers, and the Cause of the Reformed Churches therewith,* 2 Def. p. 68

XIV. He falsely repeats my Words, and delivers my Sense. Thus he represents it as my Sense, *That 'tis unlawful for Persons to submit to things lawful; meerly because Superiors require them, to maintain their Christian Liberty,* 2 Def. p. 76.

XV. He carelessly opposes the very Church which he pretends to defend. He declares, *That should she add such new Ceremonies as Cream and Spittle in Baptism, &c. as she must determine whether they are fit to be impos'd, so he must determine whether they are fit to be submitted to,* 2 Def. p. 90. And so he pretends to judge of the fitness of her Decisions, after that he has own'd her Power, and professes himself so submissive.

XVI. He unhappily urges a way of Reasoning, that falls upon, and hits himself. Thus he argues most strenuously from the *inward sense* of the Lords, that the Use of the Common-Prayer-Book was all that was intended by the Assent and Consent required; whereas their Zeal for an *Explanatory Clause*, is a strong Argument against him, that that neither was, nor would pass for the proper Sense of the Prescribed Declaration, without an *Authentick Explication* to that purpose.

XVII. He wittingly neglects the Explication of my Sense, with relation to the Affair of Mr. *Humpbreys*, and the Citations from him, of which I sent him an Account in a Friendly Message, which he takes no notice of.

XVIII. He triflingly quibbles with Words ambiguously used. As about *Circumstances and Ceremonies*, 2 Def. p. 46, 47, 48.

XIX. He strangely prides himself in Suffering, if there should be Occasion, in the way he takes, from rigorous Imposers, without considering whether or no God calls him to it, p. 303, 304.

XX. He is apparently inconsistent with himself. He owns, 2 Def. p. 45. *That the Impositions of the Church of England prove Occasions of much Heat and Division*; and yet Ibid. p. 61. He represents them *as expedient for Order and Decency sake, to prevent Factions and Divisions*. And again, p. 121. he says, *They have been the Occasion of much Contention and Quarrel among us*.

He makes Distinctions without a Difference. Thus he distinguishes between *the Principles upon which the Ministers who were Ejected went in their Nonconformity, and my Representation of them*, which was taken from them, and given mostly in their own Words, 2 Def. p. 90. And at other times he won't allow a *Distinction* where there is a *Difference*. As between the Sense of those Men that have mostly had the Ascendant in the Church, and such Men as he, who tho' *they had no hand in the Impositions, nor heart or will to the continuance of them*, are yet willing to keep their Places in the Church; between the Sense of the *Lower-House of Convocation*, and his and his Neighbours in *Buckinghamshire*, as to the Terms of Conformity; which is as widely different as East from West.

If after all, he can't be convinc'd, he may write on if he pleases. But let him forbear Reflecting on us who cannot see things in his Light, and he need be under no fear of any thing from us, to the obstructing his Usefulness, or the interrupting his Repose.

A Letter to Mr. Hoadly.

S I R,

HAVING perus'd your *Defence of the Reasonableness of Conformity*, it appears to me rather a train of tragical Complaints to move Compassion, than a *Vindication of Ministerial Conformity*. And your *Reply to my Postscript*, rather shews your Displeasure, than gives any Light. I think I spake truly, when I told you, *I had avoided what I thought might Heat and Exasperate*. But when Truth if it touches the Church is not to be born with; and freedom in speaking of real Irregularities, is represented as an intolerable Reflection on Superiors, &c. in such a case, I despair of avoiding *Exasperating*; and can be easie tho' charg'd with it.

For you to talk of *Candor and Temper*, and in the same Page refer to Mr. Ollyffe's Index, is a little odd: But I'm so used to such Treatment, that I can make light of it. Your Motion to the Readers, to view what has been publish'd on each side, I heartily approve. I think it necessary in order to the passing a true Judgment. When I have your Thoughts upon my *Introduction*, I shall fairly consider them; and I think lie open to Conviction, if you'll give but a just foundation.

dation. But if your Remarks are of the same nature with what you refer to Mr. *Ollyffe* about; (in which I have answer'd him) I can promise you but little success. For I am not ashamed to own, that I am not entirely of the *Principles* of any one Party among us, and I believe never shall: But I am ready to borrow Light from all.

As for altering my *Method of Controversie*, 'twill be time enough to consult about it, when I see occasion: And if when I told you, *That if any I have to do with would but treat me with a like Temper* as I have done you, *I should never think I had any great reason to complain*, you are not to be persuaded to answer my *Wishes*, you must take your Course, and either reiterate your Complaints till your Readers are tir'd, or forbear future Replis as you see occasion.

But tho' you can't persuade your self to answer my *Wishes*, yet I am free, upon your *Entreaty*, or without it, to examine your Remarks; and to do it with *Candor* and *Impartiality* too: But if I can never be *Candid* nor *Impartial* till I fall in with you; you must excuse me, while I am so unhappy as to want more Light.

Of Episcop-
al Or-
dination.

It will be time enough to consider what you have to add upon the Head of *Ordination*, when your *Papers* are publish'd. I can't agree with you, that *this Subject is of little concern to the Cause between us*. For if Presbyters have an Original inherent Right to Ordain, I think they may safely exercise it; where those that pretend to the sole Power of Ordination, insist upon a compliance with unscriptural Impositions, before they'll exercise it; the *lawfulness* of which *Method* I han't as I know of *acknowledg'd* as yet, nor shall I in haste.

And if they have a Divine Commission to Ordain, then where they act in pursuit of that Commission, none can justify the requiring Re-ordination. Resolve the matter as you please, this is evident; and if you herein disprove me not, you had as good say nothing. If I don't touch your Point, I'm unconcern'd, so long as I reach the Point I aim at; which is to shew, that the Non-conformity which was occasion'd by the Act of Uniformity in 1662, is justifiable. Take you what Method you please to prove it was not so; I'll take what Method I think properest to prove it was so.

I don't pretend that it follows, *because Re-ordination is a hard and unreasonable Term, that therefore the People are obliged to separate from the Church*: And yet I think it follows thence, that 'tis hard and unreasonable in your Church to require Re-ordination. And if the Ministers among the Dissenters are Ordained according to the Gospel-Rule, then those in your Church don't do well, who represent them as no Ministers; which I find is the common way. I think I have in this Volume justify'd the *Nonconformity of the People*, and cannot but esteem the Grounds solid that are here propos'd, even tho' you should still have different Apprehensions.

As for Episcopal Ordination, without doubt, *'tis lawful*. That is, a Man is as valid a Minister that has the Hands of a Bishop laid on him jointly with those of Presbyters; as he that has the Hands of Presbyters only. But if you mean by its being lawful, that it is justifiable to come under those Bonds to comply with unscriptural Impositions, as the Bishops insist on in the case of all that they Ordain, I am not convinc'd of it: I could not see it lawful for me, and therefore I could not yield to it. *The Circumstances*

which you call *Accidental*, appear'd to me so to alter the Action, as to make it unlawful. But be it as it will as to that, the Point that I debated, was not whether Episcopal Ordination was *lawful*, but whether it was *necessary*; and whether it was so necessary as that it must be superadded to a Presbyterian Ordination, agreeable to the Gospel Rule; and whether such a Re-ordination is really justifiable. Had I so diverted as you here have done from the thing in debate, I had met with strange Exclamations. But I leave you your liberty.

Of the
Subscription.

You tell me my *History of Subscriptions* is of no concern to the Debate between us, but rather tends to revive former *Animosities*. Your reason is very peculiar. *Supposing*, say you, *the Subscription requir'd in 1603, hath been esteemed a considerable Difficulty, it will not prove either that the Objections against it are reasonable, or that you are obliged to follow your Predecessors in their Opinions concerning it, or that you must separate from the Church of England.* But, does it therefore follow the Debate between us is unconcern'd in it? Is not the *Subscription requir'd in 1603*, the very same that has been requir'd since 1662? And if it has been matter of Difficulty all along, why should you intimate it has not been so? Besides, Does not the *History* I have given of Subscriptions, manifest your Church to be of an imposing Spirit? Nay, is it not thence evident, that the Spirit of Imposition has been gradually improving in it? Tho you see no force in it, you must allow me and others to think this a good Argument for our Caution against complying with it, lest it rise to a yet farther height.

I can say, *I did not know* that you spake only of the *ejected and present Nonconforming Ministers*; for you had not any limitation to confine what you said

said to them. But I can believe you when you tell me so; and therefore supposing that might be your Sense, you may remember I told you before, *that the Debate about Assent and Consent, which comprehends the other under it, hath made a particular insisting on the Subscription the less needful.* And yet I think my History of Subscriptions in your Church proper enough, to show how gradually she has proceeded in a way of Imposition, till she came to this *Assent and Consent*, which since 1662; has occasion'd so much Debate. I don't much wonder indeed you are for *forgetting* such *past things* as these: But I can't see any reason we have to forget the Workings of that rigorous imposing Spirit in former times, while we find so much of it in our own Days: Nor can I think they in earnest *study Peace and Charity*, at least in the manner and to the degree they ought to do; who are for such a Forgetfulness of past Transactions, as tends to cherish that Spirit of Imposition, which has ever been the bane of *Peace and Charity*, and ever will. And tho' you have overlook'd it, yet I think I have offered very good Reason, why the *Subscription* might be esteemed a considerable Difficulty, even by such as *have thought the Common-Prayer-Book*, as to the main of it, tolerably *fit to be used in the Publick Service of God.*

Had I given no other, I think this might suffice, that pious Persons from one Period to another, tho' they have used the main of the *Common-Prayer-Book*, have been worry'd and prosecuted, for omitting and altering such things as they thought they had just cause to scruple. If so, who can wonder it should be matter of difficulty to them, in such things, to violate their Consciences, by obliging themselves to an entire use of that Book, according to the intent of those who

urg'd the Subscription. But you have given me the reason of your overlooking this, when you declare your *uneasiness* at being put in mind of such things as these. But if you will undertake to defend a Church whose Methods are unscriptural, you must expect to hear of the unwarrantableness of her Methods; and must charge your *uneasiness* upon your unhappiness, that you are engaged in the defence of so bad a Cause.

Of the
Declarati-
on of Assent and
Consent.

I owned to you before, that the Declaration of Assent and Consent is ushered in with these Words; *That every one shall publicly declare his unfeigned Assent and Consent to the [Use] of all things contained and prescribed in these Words and no other.* Which fairly admits of this Sense: That whereas in former times Persons would often subscribe, that *they would use the form in the said Book prescrib'd in publick Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and none other,* and yet would omit, vary, and curtail the several Offices as they saw Occasion, by way of Prevention it was so contrived, that all should be obliged above Subscription, to agree to the use of this Book in such a Form of Words, as was thought most likely to deter Conscientious Persons from such a Practice. The Subscription obliged to a bare Use; but now say the Imposers, you shall declare for the Use of the Common-Prayer, &c. in such a Form of Words, as shall imply an Approbation. The *Legislators* by mentioning the *Use* in this Case don't confine *the Assent and Consent* to that only. This is plain from their mentioning more, even *Approbation* in the Case of Lecturers: But only they intimate, that all Ministers must so declare for the *Use* of the Common-Prayer Book from that time forward, as to give the Church Assurance, that they would not by their Omissions, Alterations, and Mutilations,

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discover a Disapprobation of any Part or Sentence of that Book to the entire Use of which it was intended they should be confined. And though the *Use* should be mentioned twenty times in the Act, and the *Approbation* but once, I should think it thence evident, that the Assent and Consent was intended to exclude such as *disapproved* any part of the Prescrib'd Liturgy, or of any of its Offices.

I argue not from a *probability against express Words*. Others may take that Method, that find their Cause needs it. *Use* was required before *Approbation* ever was. When then I own Persons were now obliged to declare for the *Use* in such Words as amounted to an *Approbation*, I don't say they were not to *use* it which the *Words express*, but they were to do more than *use* it; they were to approve of *all and every thing in it*. I am far from intimating that because the *Use* of the Common-Prayer Book was required before, it might not be required again by a new Act of Parliament: But I must confess I think it very unlikely, if they had intended no more than the bare *Use* that the *Subscription* before required engaged to, they should add a Verbal Declaration, in such Phrases as amount to an entire *Approbation*. *It seems to have been the Design of the Legislators*, not only to bring Men under greater and more solemn Obligations to a constant *Use* of it; but to oblige them to such an entire Use of every Part and Phrase as should leave no room for an Excuse upon a Pretence of disapproving any thing in it, which had before been usual. This I think more than the *Subscription* amounted to. But I perceive I must be cautious; because you talk of my *answering for my Reflections upon the Legislators*: An Insinuation that as far as I can judge is as little likely to serve your Cause,

as it is to promote that Peace and Charity, that Candor and Lenity of which you sometimes profess your self so studious.

Of the Evidence from the Journal of the Lords.

I think I have sufficiently prov'd from the Legislators themselves, that more than *Use* was intended by this Declaration. You tell me you have heard the *Truth of my Account much contested*. But as long as it has not been by any that have consulted the Journal of the Lords, 'tis well enough. In this case there was not the least occasion for *revoking and repealing the Paragraphs* in the Act of Uniformity, that declare for the *Use* of the Common-Prayer, but seeing some of them had not been confin'd to bare *use*, but had mention'd *approbation* also, and requir'd a verbal Declaration to be made in Words, that amounted to a compleat Approbation, it was requisite, if they did intend a *bare use*, that it should be declar'd. And this is what was aim'd at by the Lords, and would have put the Matter out of all question, had the Commons concurr'd: But they refusing to allow of *bare use* as sufficient, and drawing over a Majority of the Lords to a concurrence with them, in effect determin'd, that they who put that sense upon the Declaration of Assent and Consent, that it was to the *bare use* and no more, leaving Persons still room for disapproving any thing contain'd or prescrib'd in the Common-Prayer-Book, wretchedly misinterpret it, and assume to themselves a Power of interpreting contrary to the Legislators themselves. And this appears from my Account, which I find puts you a little to it; or at least would some other Men, if they were in your case. If you can put it off with saying, it is but an *Opinion of Lords and Commons*, not an *Act*, while you know it directly overthrows that *Opinion* which you defend; or if you can evade it, by represent-

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ing that as a *private Story*, which was a matter notorious to such as liv'd at that time, and for satisfaction in which you are referred to the most authentick Evidence conceivable; if these little Arts afford you any Relief, I envy you not your satisfaction. I shall refer you farther on this Head to what I have return'd to Mr. *Ollyffe*, tho I must confess I think it to little purpose to argue, where so decisive an Evidence is so oddly cavil'd at.

As for *Lecturers*, the Act expressly requires, that they declare their *Assent and Consent unto, and [Approbation] of the Book of Common-Prayer*; and since you own, that it was not design'd that they should be more hardly put to it than others; it must follow, that *Approbation*, as well as *Assent and Consent to the Use*, is requir'd in the case of others also. And therefore I don't understand you when you tell me, that out of a sense of your *Duty to regard the Act it self*, you cannot give your *Assent and Consent to any thing but the use of the Common-Prayer-Book*: For since *approbation* which is more than *use*, is, according to your own Concession, requir'd not only of *Lecturers*, but of all that make the Declaration, by the Act that requires it, I should think your *regard to the Act it self* should induce you to such an *Assent and Consent to use*, as carry'd in it an *approbation* of all and every thing contain'd and prescrib'd, without exception; especially since there is nothing in the Act which confines it to *use only*, as you would insinuate.

This Representation carries not in it any thing of a *Contradiction*. For there is no inconsistency in the World, for Persons to declare their *Assent and Consent to the use of the whole Common-Prayer-Book*, in such Words as signify an *Approbation of all and every thing therein con-*

tain'd and prescrib'd: And tho' some come with their *soft Interpretations*, by which they encourage themselves and others, to Assent and Consent to the use of all and every thing contain'd and prescrib'd, in a Book that contains and prescribes some things they don't approve of, and may *satisfie their Consciences* when they have done, yet till I better understand their Principles, I must beg leave to differ from their Practice. Tho' you may be able *unfeignedly* to Assent and Consent, and Approve, yet it does not therefore follow, that others must be able to do so too. And if they can't do it *unfeignedly*, then if they are prevail'd with to do it, it must be *feignedly*. And to declare as much, is neither a *ludicrous and bantering piece of Wit*; nor can I see but that 'tis very fairly reconcileable, to *good Sense, good Manners, and a good Conscience too*. And therefore you might spare your Reproof for a better occasion. It must be a *difficulty* (whether you may think fit to allow for it or no) to insist upon it, that Persons should *unfeignedly* declare their *Assent, Consent, and Approbation*, to all and every thing contain'd and prescrib'd in a Book, in which there are several things that that they can by no means agree to, or approve of.

A Man may be content to *use* several things which he can't *unfeignedly approve of*: This is no *strange Supposition*. It actually was the case with many of the Puritans; and what they groaned under as their Burden. As far indeed as they *promised compliance*, they gave it: But it was their Burden to be under such Confinements. And tho' they comply'd many of them, so far as to use great part of the Liturgy, yet I hardly believe they would ever have been induc'd to have declared their unfeigned Assent, Consent and Approbation, to all and every thing contained and pre-

prescribed in the Common-Prayer-Book. They must have acted *feignedly*, *i. e.* they must have contradicted the inward sense of their Minds, had they done it. When I say *the guard of this Word unfeigned would not have been needful, had the use only been here intended* you need not be at a loss for my meaning: For I don't desire People should believe that it is Nonsense to make an unfeigned promise to use this Book; but I intend thereby to intimate, that if they unfeignedly declare they'll not only use, but that they approve of all and every thing contained and prescribed in the Common-Prayer-Book, while there are several things in it they really dislike, they act inconsistently.

Tho' Men may for certain reasons be prevail'd with to use what they don't much like, yet they can't unfeignedly declare their approbation of what they dislike, and act consistently with that *Simplicity and Godly Sincerity*, which the Gospel requires. And herein this *Declaration* differs from the *Subscription* that was required before. That was to be *ex animo*. All that subscribed were heartily to declare, by a Writing under their Hands, their intention to use the Book: But this Act requires an unfeigned Declaration, that rises as high as an *approbation*, of all and every thing contained and prescribed. I am sorry to find you think it worth your while to lay stress upon such poor Evasions as fill your Discourse under this Head.

Assent and Consent barely to use, is not, in strictness of Speech, proper. You say *they are in this Act both apply'd to the use of this Liturgy*; and so they are to the *Approbation* of it, which I take to be as *material* as any thing in the Act, especially when the Declaration is so worded, as of it self and abstractedly considered to amount to a plain

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Approbation. I don't question its being customary in *Forms of Law* to apply two or more Words which have difference in their signification, to one and the same thing: But if besides *consenting* to use ordinarily such Offices as are prescribed, I must give such an *Assent* to all and every thing contained and prescribed in the Common-Prayer-Book, as the Act it self intimates, is to be esteemed an *Approbation*; in such a case I may very justly question whether *Assenting* be not different from *Consenting*.

In this I speak plainly and without *Hyperboles*, at which you are so much offended. Though, I must confess, when I was giving the sense of the ejected Ministers, I can't see why I might not use their Words. And if I took you as speaking to me, when you declare you spake to them, it is a Mistake which I believe most others would have run into; especially considering, that tho' you tell me *when you speak of me particularly, you speak most commonly in the third Person*, yet you cannot tell me 'tis always so.

As for Dr. Swadlin, he is not such a *poor neglected Author* as you represent him: Many Sermons on the 30th of *January* that have been borrowed from him, or at least the most fragrant Flowers of which have from Year to Year been pick'd out of his Garden, evidence the contrary. Were I to judge from thence, I should reckon him a celebrated Author in your Church. I look upon him as the Person that first started the Parallel between King *Charles I.* and our Blessed Saviour, of which many have since discover'd so great a fondness: And many of his particular Flights have since been so frequently used in the Pulpits upon that Anniversary, which some Men reckon gives them a liberty to rail at pleasure, that I think verily you had not best go too far in
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running him down. If he was in a Frenzy in one Sermon, why not in the rest? And if so, why has he been so much used? But it seems it was an *inexcusable fault to draw in such a ridiculous Quotation out of a distracted Author.* Not more inexcusable, I think verily, than for many of your Church to transcribe out of him Passages as ridiculous, into their 30th of *January* Sermons. *My Behaviour*, you tell me, *was unjust and unbecoming.* Truly, Sir, those Words affect me less, because, as far as I can judge by the whole train of your Discourse, you are hardly like to think my Behaviour just or becoming, till I have the same Veneration for the discriminating Particularities of your Church, as you have; which I quite despair of.

Which way would you have had me signify'd my *dislike*? You your self don't suppose I approved what I quoted out of him. My aim in inserting it was to convince People what extravagant Idolizers of the Common-Prayer might run into. In this respect it has answer'd my end; which I can't forbear owning is to my satisfaction, as much as you are disgusted at it. I don't think *every extravagant distracted Man's Writings worth the looking after*; and therefore am sorry his have been look'd after so much as they have; nor because *he was not censured and his Book suppressed*, do I therefore think I may draw Passages from him; but I think if he pass'es so current from Year to Year upon one certain Day, it is odd he must pass for Distracted all the Year after: But had your Convocation branded him as a Man Distracted, as I should have hoped we might have heard no more of his Golden Sentences from the Pulpit, upon the Occasion fore-mentioned; so neither should you have heard any thing of him from me. But it seems I *argued*
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from him against Assent and Consent to the Common-Prayer-Book. How did I argue from him? Did I lay stress upon his Authority? Or did I infer the Unlawfulness of Assent and Consent, from any thing I quoted from him? Nothing like it. I told what he said in Commendation of the Common-Prayer-Book; and declared, that the ejected Ministers could not but differ from him, and from those that were of his Mind. And you did wisely to mistake the Point, and represent me as arguing from him.

But why should you blame me so severely. You have run the Matter much too far. Surely Retraction should not be so difficult a practice to a Christian and a Divine: And if you now understand my meaning, you cannot avoid it. I can freely leave others the liberty of ascribing what they esteem excellently good, to the great fountain of all Goodness: Nay, I'll overlook a thousand extravagant Flights in Commendation of what I have comparatively but a low esteem for, provided I can but have my liberty left me: But if your Church will require me, before she'll own me for a Minister, to give such an Assent and Consent, as would amount to an Approbation, beyond what I can see ground for, I shall desire to be excused. I don't make the bare private Opinion of some particular Persons an Argument against the Declaration of Assent and Consent; for I know many do Assent and Consent, who as much differ from them as I do; and yet when I am speaking of the Assent and Consent required, I think I may justly mention the high Strains of some that have Assented and Consented, to which so formal a Declaration may perhaps have tempted them: And I can't discern why my exposing them should give offence to Men of Moderation.

But you here tell me, that I have precluded my self, by *joining in severely reprehending a Person, who hath little deserved it at our hands, for endeavouring to expose some Extravagancies on our side, because the Irreligious and Profane might be induced by them to deride serious Religion and the Worship of God.* I take your hint; and shall upon this occasion freely declare, that I have a very particular Respect for that excellent Person whom I may very well suppose you refer to. And tho' I did recite what was said by Mr. *Baxter*, as to a Performance commonly ascribed to him, and added in the Margin what was said by the Lord-Chief-Justice *Hale* upon that Occasion; (which you in your Candid way are pleased to call *joining in severely reprehending him*) yet I have a just sense how well he hath deserved since, not only *at our hands*, but at the hands of all that value either the Interest of Religion, or our Civil Rights and Liberties; and for that reason there are not many Men in *England* that I think deserve more general Honour and Esteem. But at the same time shall add, that I have that opinion of him, as to believe, that tho' several of the Extravagances mentioned in that Book deserved to be exposed, yet had he been as sensible at the time of writing it, as he has been since, of the Advantage several Passages in his Book would give to many *to deride serious Religion, and the Worship of God*, he would have forborn them. And I can safely say, that were I sensible that any Passages of mine would give Advantage to Persons *to deride serious Religion, and the Worship of God*, I would discard them; and none should be more free than I to declare against them. But then I think we must allow for a considerable difference between *scriptural Phrases*, tho' used in a homely manner, or true Doctrines tho' oddly expressed; and obnoxious Passages

Passages in Humane Forms, which are therefore freely reflected on, because unfit to be imposed: And for the much greater Concern Religion has in the one than in the other.

After all, if you won't recede from your sense of this Declaration of Assent and Consent, I don't see that I have any reason to be concern'd. You may contend for it as long as you please, and be as positive as you will, and make as many Converts as you can; leave me but my liberty, and I am easie, and shall give you no Molestation. But if giving my Reasons why I can't be of your Mind, be a *Censuring the Conforming Clergy*, 'tis a sign you are very tender; and to Standers-by would look like an Argument, that your Cause won't bear close Canvassing.

As to the Rubrick at the end of the Office of Baptism, I cannot yet be reconciled to it. You will understand it of Children *duly Baptized*, which is rather an Addition; than a genuine Explication. I pretend not to prove the Words *incapable of this sense*. 'Tis enough for me, that no Man that hath not a Turn to serve, would put

Of that Passage in the Rubrick, *It is certain by God's Word, that Children which are Baptized, dying before they commit Actual Sin, are undoubtedly saved, &c.*

such a sense upon them. I have given you Mr. Baxter's Sense, and his Reasons, which you pass lightly over, as if your contrary Affirmation were sufficient Confutation. You can, you say, only collect thence, that Bishop Sanderson and Bishop Gunning, (and you might have added Bishop Morley too) did think that the Children of Heathens had a Title to Baptism, provided they had Sponsors. Had you been so disposed, you might have collected thence, that it was their sense, that all Children Baptized in your way are undoubtedly saved.

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For if all Children, without exception, are to be *Baptized with Sponsors*; and all so Baptized are *duly Baptized*; then it does not barely follow, that Infants duly Baptized are saved, but that all Infants Baptized in your way are saved. 'Twas not supposed, that they *thought any Infants saved but what were duly Baptized*: But as long as all that had Godfathers were according to them duly Baptized, their zeal for this Expression was equivalent to their declaring for the Salvation of all Baptized in the Church way. You tell me here, that this can't be supposed, and that must be supposed, and act as if you had a liberty to *suppose* what you pleased, while your Neighbour must stand wholly to your Courtesie: But I expect a good Reason before I can consent to manage a Debate upon those Terms. I again refer you and your Readers to Mr. *Baxter*.

But let it be a *piece of Wit* or good Humour, 'tis to me indifferent; (it shall pass for whether of the two you please) Your stir about the Damnation of Infants, both in your former and latter Book, might, I think truly, very well have been spar'd. For whereas I cited from one of the ejected Ministers, the threatening Clause of the Second Commandment, why must it be in proof of Damnation? I'm sure I intended no such thing; and I firmly believe the same of him from whom I cited it. You may remember I told you, that *there's a great deal of difference between a positive dooming any to Hell, and a giving them a certain Passport to Heaven*; which one Remark had clear'd the whole matter, had you thought fit to have observed it; and therefore you did wisely to overlook it. I produced no proof of the Damnation of any of them, or the probability of it. You there much mistake me. I drew no Inference from present Punishments, to either cer-
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tain or probable Punishments hereafter, of such as left the World in Infancy. All that was aim'd at was to shew; that the Salvation of all Baptized Infants is not so undoubtedly certain from the Word of God as this Rubrick represents it. If you will come and argue upon this; and say they must be either saved or damned, and so force your Inferences upon me, you must use your pleasure; but I conceive would not much like it in your own case.

• All that I shall say to this matter farther is; that tho' I am far from thinking it *certain by God's Word, that all Children which are Baptized, dying before they commit Actual Sin, are undoubtedly saved*; yet I am far from dooming any that are duly Baptized to Hell: But that there are many Baptized Infants that die such, whom I durst not doom to Hell, of whom yet I durst not say; that *it is certain by God's Word, that they are thereby; or undoubtedly saved*: As to whom, for want of farther Light, I can be content to suspend my Thoughts; without forming any thing of a positive Judgment.

As to *Baptismal Regeneration*, I shall refer you to my Answer to Mr. Ollyffe. But if a certainty of Salvation necessarily follows upon the bare Ordinance of Baptism; be as much surpriz'd as you will, I think the ejected Minister; whose Letter I quoted, had some reason for his Reflections. A Tyrant that should kill newly Baptized Children, would then, by being *an Instrument of putting an end to their abode here*, be an Instrument of sending them certainly to Heaven; as the *Persecutors* were in the case of the *Martyrs*. But I desire you to remember, that you here grant me all that I contend for. For you own in so many Words, that the Rubrick says, that all Children Baptized, dying before *Actual Sin*, are saved. If

so, there's an end of the Debate. And yet he that observes how you manage your self under this and the former Head, will be apt to think, that you have then the most Words, when you have least to say.

'Tis a great Objection against *Godfathers* and *Godmothers* as used in your Church, that *they justify out the Parents Right to devote their Children in that Ordinance to God.* This you deny: And because a Parent in your way provides all things that are required in order to the Dedication of his Child to God, and knows that it is in order to this Dedication that he doth this, you think it evident, that he himself properly Dedicates his Child to God. But in the mean time you forget, that where a Parent has a just claim to the Privileges and Blessings of the Christian Covenant, on the behalf and for the benefit of his Child, your Office takes no notice of his Right in the Administration of Baptism, but as much grafts it upon the Undertaking of the Sureties, (without regard to any other Consideration) as if the Parent had no Right at all; and tho' he have none. This appears to me an excluding the Parent in the case. And as for the things you mention in the Parents case, as his providing Sponsors, and taking care to choose proper Godfathers, &c. they evidence indeed his consent, that the Sponsors should dedicate his Child to God, but not that the Dedicating it is his own proper act.

In order to that, I must needs own, I look upon an *explicit Covenanting* for it in his own Person to be necessary; and the Office ought to oblige to it. And tho' my *set of Principles*, which you call *new*, won't allow me to join in imposing any thing as necessary, which our Saviour has left altogether indifferent, yet I think I can prove, to the satisfaction of candid Enquirers,

that our Blessed Lord, by instituting Baptism as a Seal of the Covenant, hath made it the Duty of those that give up either themselves or their Little Ones as part of themselves, in this Ordinance to God, to be *explicit in their Covenanting* : And I can at any time refuse to administer an Ordinance to any one, who refuses to comply with the Gospel Rule relating to that Ordinance. For my part, I should not think it *lawful to Baptize Children*, in the Right of their Parents, without an explicit Covenant on the part of one of the Parents at least : And therefore I think the want of it is a *sufficient Objection against complying with your Office*.

Nor can I discern, that if such explicit Covenanting were required, *the Ordinance might easily come to be as much profaned as it is now*. For if Parents were required with Solemnity to put in their claim to the Christian Covenant on the behalf of their Children, and bind them under Bonds to be the Lords, they could not think to excuse themselves, by devolving that upon others in which themselves have the greatest concern. Their *Carelessness* in that respect is justly chargeable *on the Office it self*, because it encourages it ; and is so far from being as you say, as *solemn as possible*, that it wholly omits that Covenanting on the part of the Parents, on which the Right of such Children, as I am now speaking of, to Baptism, is bottom'd. In our way the *Cure* is easie, by pressing upon Parents their proper Duty, which we don't omit : In yours there's no provision for a *Cure*, because the Parents are excluded.

But you need not fear, because I object against your Office of Baptism, as omitting so material a thing as the Parental Covenanting on the behalf of those Children that are admitted in their

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Right, that I shall therefore ever *charge the Carelessness of Men on any Texts of Scripture*: There can be no danger of this; because I own the Scripture to be *divinely Inspir'd*, which I am far from thinking of your Office. I am not more likely to *charge the Institution and Precedents of Baptism, found in the New Testament, as not including in them explicit Vows and Cautions, sufficient to prevent Mistakes and Carelessness, in so solemn a matter*, than you for omitting the express mention of Infant-Baptism, are like to charge the New Testament with encouraging *Anabaptism*. Which had you considered, I hardly believe you would have thought such hints proper to have been urged upon me in a way of Argument.

I am not more at a loss about the excluding Parents where Children are admitted to Baptism in their Right, than I am about the admission of Sponsors, to the Covenanting part of that Solemnity, in their room. You tell me, *there is no natural Right nor positive Law pretended for this*. I am therefore the more to seek for the justification of it. You say, *the willingness of a Person to become a Sponsor with the Parents consent, is sufficient*. And I easily grant it is so, as to the undertaking for the Education of the Child in case of the Parents death or negligence; but I can't see how the same can be said as to the Covenanting with God for the Child, where the stress lies, tho' you prudently overlook it. I don't see how *the Fathers can give power in this respect to the Sponsor, or he receive it; or thence have a sufficient Right*. Where *the Faith of the Parents is the ground of the Baptism of their Children*, a Substitution of others to profess that Faith, and pursuant to it, to dedicate the Child to God, Covenanting for it, and binding it under the most so-

lemn Bonds to be the Lord's, is to me a thing utterly unintelligible.

Whereas you told me before, that *the grossest abuse of an Institution, in it self useful, is not a sufficient Argument against the Institution*; I answer'd, that tho' this was true, *where an Institution has a Divine Original*; yet *where it is purely Humane, and ordinarily so manag'd, as to interfere with what is really Divine, tho' it might be of use if duly regulated, yet I could not but look upon my self as obliged to declare against it, till that Regulation is fixed, which shall keep the Divine Institution safe upon its true and proper Bottom.* This I apprehend the case here. For for my part, I can't see how I could manage the Affair of Godfathers, according to the Order of your Church, in a case where Parents are free and fit to devote their own Children to God, without *interfering with something that I take to be really Divine*; which I must confess is my notion of the Parents Personal Claim and Dedication of their Infants to God, in the case of my applying to them the Seal of the Covenant in their Right. *Declaring against the Mismanagement of others* here won't do; for the very waving this, by admitting a Substitution, is it self such a *Mismanagement*, as I could not be satisfied to have any hand in. Be the Godfathers as sober as they will, this does not cease to be a *Mismanagement*. Tho' even as to that, many find it so difficult to get suitable Persons to stand at the Font, that if in some places Ministers should positively resolve not to admit of any *Godfathers but serious Professors of Christianity*, either the greatest part of the Children must remain unbaptized, or two or three sober Persons must be Godfathers for all the Children in the Parish. Suppose we therefore that a Minister refusing to admit any to stand at the Font but *serious Professors*

sors of Christianity, might be able to answer in the Court of his own Conscience, and of his great Master, and to all the Courts of this World also, (though I question the last, where no such Persons are at hand) yet I don't see he is therefore able to answer for his concurrence in a Substitution of others in the room of those whose Right it is to enter their Children under the Bonds of the Gospel Covenant, so as to convey a Right to the Blessings of it. This is not a possible Inconvenience, but a standing Mismanagement. And let the Canon about the admission of Godfathers remain in full force, and a Minister be as able to justify his strict adhering to it as you would have him, yet I don't see it alters the case.

However, that the requiring Sponsors in your way tends to the profaning of this Ordinance, appears to me notorious. The Carelessness of the generality of Sponsors, is not the only Argument of it; tho' yet it is not to be overlook'd, or made light of. The throwing the Parents Work upon Substitutes, as your Church manages it, mightily tends to a Profanation. Would Parents indeed take more care in the choice of their Sponsors, and Ministers be generally more strict as to the Qualifications of the Persons they admit, there would be better security of the Christian Education of the Children that are Baptized, than there is as Matters are now commonly manag'd: But still, for Parents to be allow'd to throw the Covenanting part upon others, naturally tends to abate their sense of their proper Duty, and to make Parents, and Sponsors, and all Spectators, less sensible of the peculiar Favour of God to Believers and their Seed, than they ought to be. Much Guilt is this way contracted: And the requiring Sponsors in your way, heightens it: Because Persons are brought in to solemnize a Stipulation

with God, in a way that is unscriptural, and really unintelligible. Which with me would be an Argument against the *Declaration* and *Subscription*, tho' I were assur'd I should never want Godfathers duly qualify'd, for any Children I might be called to Baptize. If you see nothing of *absurdity* in the *Questions* put to the Sponsors in your Office, I can't help it: Possibly you can't tell how to allow your self to suppose any thing that is absurd can come from your Church: But it does not follow but that Persons may act very Uprightly, and have some small share of Understanding too, and yet not be able to rise so high in their Veneration. *That the Answers to the Questions* in this Office are intended as *Promises of Faith and Repentance, made in the Name of the Infants*, is it self an Absurdity, till you can prove that the Father has any Warrant to desire his Friend to promise for his Child, that he shall Believe in Christ, and Repent of his Sins. How can One promise any such thing for Another? The Father himself can't do it, (nor does God require he should) much less can he authorize a Substitute to do it for him. And how can the Godfather say, *he desires to be Baptiz'd*? It requires more than *Candor* and *Equity* to put a tolerable Interpretation upon it. Tho' I can safely say, that I would have *desir'd Baptism in my Infancy, had I been capable of doing it*; And tho' I that way discover my hearty Approbation of the Proceeding of my Parents in Devoting me to my God and Saviour in that Ordinance; yet for any Man, for my sake, to have profess'd, that he *desir'd to be Baptized*, when he had been Baptized long before; or out of the abundance of His Charity to have declar'd, that I *desir'd then to be Baptized*, as hoping that I would have done so, had I then had the same Capacity and Inclination

nation as I have now ; this is so odd an Office, and in it self so ridiculous, that I profess I could not find in my Heart to give such a Man Thanks.

And in short, they that can be *satisfy'd* with this, are not *only more willing to be satisfy'd*, than they *ought in reason to be* ; but it looks as if they would be *satisfy'd* with any thing their Church could require, whether with Reason or without.

The Ejected Ministers were the more against the *Sign of the Cross* in Baptism, for fear of encouraging People to ascribe Power and Vertue to that Sign. They must indeed be *Injudicious* People that could be suppos'd to do so : And yet it having before been usual in the Church to have too much ascrib'd to it, and many Men of Learning even among Protestants, discovering an Inclination that way, they thought themselves the more concern'd to prevent what they apprehended a pernicious Error. Upon my use of the Word *Injudicious* in the case, you made a stir before, and now renew it : But having sufficiently answer'd you before, I shall not now return to it : But shall only add, that altho' the Words in the Office are these ; *We sign him with the Sign of the Cross*, in token that hereafter he shall not be asham'd to confess the Faith of Christ Crucify'd, &c. yet when the Canon calls it a *Dedicating Sign* ; and such Men as Mr. Hooker and Dr. Comber represent it, as a *Teaching Sign*, and an *Assuring Sign*, that we shall overcome all our Enemies, I think both our Fathers and we might justly fear that our using it would encourage the ascribing too much *Power* to it : Tho' in this case we don't lay our stress upon the sense of the Word *in token*, (as you would have us understood) but upon the Representation of those who have been fondest of this Sign. I

Of the use of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism.

did not so distinctly consider *your Interpretation* of the Words in this part of the Office, as you, it seems, desir'd, because I could not find it different from Mr. *Ollyffe's*: And for the same reason shall again refer you to what I have said to him under this Head, that I mayn't run out in needless Repetitions. Only two or three things I would not overlook.

You would have it thought that I much Misrepresented you, when upon occasion of my repeating those Words of yours, *a sense in which it is impossible they should be meant in*, I presently add this Question, *And does Mr. H. really think it impossible for Persons to apprehend this to be their meaning?* As if there were such a mighty difference between these two! Alas, Sir, Let what will be *really meant* by Words, they affect Persons no otherwise, than as they *apprehend they were meant*. And that more was meant in this case than was express'd, is what any Man, I should think, would be inclinable to believe; that consulted Mr. *Hooker*, and Dr. *Comber*, and Others, that are recommended as explaining the sense of your Church. What you afterwards add, in justification of your Arguing against *Occasional Communion*, in a way of Resemblance (as you apprehended) to our Arguing upon this Head, is nothing to the purpose. For tho' many injudicious People in your Church ascribe too much to the Sign of the Cross, and think there is more in it than there really is; yet they are encourag'd so to do, by what they find ascrib'd to it, by those that are reckon'd the best Explainers of the Sense of the Church: Whereas those among the Dissenters that are so *Injudicious* as to apprehend that their Principles would be betray'd by an Occasional Communion with their Brethren, either understand not true Catholick Principles, or quite mistake the declared Sense of those who

best explain them. Again, tho' you were ten times more offended than you are, I cannot forbear *remembering* such things as shew the unwarrantableness of the Methods of that Church of which you are so fond; and of this nature I take a *Minister's Suspension to be, for omitting the Cross.* For tho' I am of Opinion that the Law will justify the *Suspending a Minister for not answering those Obligations which he hath solemnly brought himself under*, even in Matters as little *Essential* as this is; yet I desire to be excus'd from being of a Church, that will in Matters own'd not to be *Essential*, force me *solemnly to bring my self under such Obligations*, as will leave me liable to Suspension, when I wave them, in compliance with such as really scruple them.

Again, your Argument, *that if the sufficiency of Christ's Institution. consider'd by it self be urged against the Cross, it may be so also against the use of any Prayers at the Solemnity of Baptism*, will then hold good, when you can prove the Cross as necessary where there is room for it, as serious regular Prayers are at such a Solemnity: But till then, you may amuse your Reader as long as you please, with your *As ifs*, and your Complaints; but they signify nothing. For the Institution in its own Nature implies Prayers, and supposes them where there is room: But it excludes the Cross as a *Dedicating*, aye or even a *Betokening Sign* in Baptism, unless you can prove that our Saviour left behind him a warrant to any to add it.

Once more: Tho' *the Sign of the Cross is not used in an Idolatrous manner among us*, yet I'm of Bishop Taylor's mind, which you wisely pass by; and still stand to it, that *where any Custom had its rise from Man, was originally a precarious Fancy, and has neither Necessity nor Conveniency belonging*
to

to it; if the Papists have grossly abused it, we may safely discard it; nay to do it would be our Wisdom.

As for *Kneeling at the Communion*, tho' I think I was inclinable to understand you, yet I can't yet find, that what you say is justifiable. For tho' I deny not the Lawfulness of this Practice, yet I know not that in my *Abridgment* I have said a great deal for it: And if I had not, I can't see how any thing I have added in my last Performance, could justify your saying, That I had a great deal to that Purpose in a former Book, where neither I, nor Others, are able to find it.

Of the
Office of
Ordina-
tion.

If Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, have been in the Church from the Apostles Times, I must needs say I think them to have been of *Divine Appointment*. And I think the asserting the one is equivalent to the other; and that was all I intended by so expressing it. The Sentence in the Preface, which signifies they have been in the Church from the Apostles Time, is the Fundamental Principle the Office goes upon, which presupposes it. That this Sentence has *nothing in it contrary to the Word of God*, is more than some Men can declare, who apprehend they can trace a different Settlement there in the Apostles Time, than the mention of these three Orders (according to the present Notion of them) would lead them to expect.

And though you tell me, *That the Prayers in the Ordination Office imply not any thing plainly, but that God hath appointed divers Orders of Ministers in his Church*; yet as long as the Preface tells us, that the Office was design'd for the Continuance of those very Orders, which it declares have been in the Church from the Apostles Time; we can't mistake the meaning of the divers Orders
of

of Ministers which the Prayers intimate were appointed ; we can't pretend to fasten any other Sense, than what supposes, *Bishops, Priests, and Deacons*, to be directly referr'd to.

You farther say, All that is intended, is, That we own that we *think it an evident Truth*, that there have been three such distinct Orders all along : But how can they own this, who are so far from thinking it *evident*, that they question whether it be a *Truth*. You tell me, you are far from *meaning this* : And yet supposing the Assent and Consent requir'd, refers to that Sentence, as the ground of the Office for Ordination, I cannot see how you can get off from it. Your Instance which you brought for a Parallel as to *the Existence of our Blessed Lord before he was born of the Virgin Mary*, I thought unhappy : And must still say, That I don't think it *exactly* quadrates.

Though I can say, 'Tis *evident to all Men diligently Reading the Holy Scriptures*, that our Lord had a Being before his Birth of the *Virgin*, as long as I can find it there : yet I can't say the *Diocesan Episcopacy*, and your *Modern Deacons*, are *Evident to all Men Reading the Holy Scriptures*, because I can't find any thing of them there ; nor can I perceive, that those who are most fond of them can herein go any farther than my self. For tho' they make mighty Boasts, yet when they come to be press'd, they commonly leave the *Holy Scriptures*, and fly to *Antiquity*.

You may ask as often as you please, *Who does not see this ?* And, *Who does not see that ?* (*Which is such a sort of Reply, as I have been too much us'd to, to be much surpriz'd at.*) It answers not your End, as long as any Man may see, that if you keep up three such Orders in your Church as your present *Bishops, Priests, and Deacons* are, under
this

this pretence, that there have been three such Orders in the Church from the Apostles Time, if you can't prove there have been three such Orders, your Assertion comes to nothing. And therefore your Position is as directly overthrown, if it be made appear there has not all along been such *Deacons* as yours, as if it were prov'd, that there has not all along been such *Bishops* as those in your Church.

On this account 'tis much to the purpose to say, that *Preaching Deacons were unknown in the Apostles Times*. You take me up presently indeed, by telling me, that St. Stephen's being a Deacon, and his attending upon meaner Offices, did not at all binder, but that he might lawfully Preach as Occasion offered. I readily grant it: But I can hardly suppose you could have apprehended your Remark had been at all needful, had you consider'd those Words of mine that immediately follow, *viz. Preaching was not then a Part of the Office, as now*.

There I lay my stress; and yet you pass it by; and I confirm it by a Passage from *Oecumenius*, of which you take no notice: If you had, you could not certainly have ask'd me, *Whether Preaching Destroys the Essentials of Deaconship?* For he tells you, that an Order of Deacons, who by being such are empower'd to Preach, is quite another thing from the first Deacons. And if it be so, then tho' you did not think of a Dispute about *Deacons*, being confin'd in your Thoughts to the Superiority of *Bishops over Presbyters*; yet one of your present three Orders is gone, and so there are but two remaining.

But to come to the Order of *Bishops*. If there have been *Bishops over meer Presbyters*, with such Distinct Offices as you ascribe to each of them, and that from the Apostles Times, I'm ready to
acknow.

acknowledge to you the Dispute about Order and Degree is so far needless, as that it may well be forborn. You are pleas'd for Proof to refer to Archbishop *Usher*, Bishop *Pearson*, and Mr. *Chillingworth*. And I must tell you, one single *Blondel* suffices me in answer to all of them. I may well think I have sufficiently guarded against the Notion of an Apostolical Episcopacy, like ours in *England*, in the First Part of my *Defence*, till I see your unanswerable Confutation of it. But you stop short, that you may take me to task for dealing so gently with you upon so foul a Mistake as you had been guilty of, when I said no more, than that you were not over fair in Citing Mr. *Baxter* upon this Head. Having now seen your Vindication, I have yet more to say. But I'll first state the Matter fairly, and then make my Remark.

I was in the Seventh Chapter of my Abridgment, giving Mr. *Baxter's* Sense in short from himself, as to the *Erastian*, *Episcopal*, *Presbyterian*, and *Independent* Principles of Church Government, with none of which he could entirely fall in, tho' he reckon'd each had some peculiar Truths which the other Parties were apt to overlook.

As to the *Episcopal* Party, he inclin'd to allow them two of their great Principles. (1.) *A Superiority in the Primitive Church, of general unfix'd Church Officers, over fix'd Bishops or Pastors.* (2.) *An early fixing in Particular Churches, of Bishops that had Presbyters under them.* This he own'd was so early, that he could not allow himself to oppose such Bishops, tho' he could find nothing favouring them in Scripture. In your First Book against me, you refer to this place, and produce Mr. *Baxter*, (1.) As asserting a Superiority maintained in the Primitive Church by unfix'd Church Officers, over Pastors in general; while

Reasonab.
of Conf.
Part 1. p.
109, 110.

p. 215.

while he meant it only over such *Pastors* as were *Bishops*. (2.) As asserting, that it appears in Scripture that there was such a Superiority, as he declared expressly the Scripture did not favour. This being the true state of the Case, I said in my *Second Defence*, that you were not *over fair* in citing him. And this I think was rather over soft, than over severe. I added also, that *to serve your own Purpose*, you had left out the word *Bishops*, and mention'd only the word *Pastors*, when you recited his Assertion out of my Abridgment. And upon this you are all in a Flame. But I hope a little Consideration may calm and cool you. You intimate I can't *give the least shadow of a Proof*, either that your Purpose is at all *serv'd by this Omission*, or that his Sense could be more intelligibly express'd than you have express'd it. I think I can give substantial Proof of both; and therefore can't see how I am oblig'd to acknowledge I have done you an Injury in this Charge. My Proof that Mr. Baxter's Sense might have been more intelligibly express'd, so as to be more truly understood by your Reader, than as you have express'd it, is this: That had you said Mr. Baxter had asserted a Superiority in the Primitive Church over *Bishops* or *Pastors*, maintain'd by general unfix'd Church Officers, you had then clear'd him from intimating, that those were meer Presbyters that the Apostles or Evangelists at first maintain'd a Superiority over, which was a thing very remote from his Thoughts: And this he guarded against by stiling them *Bishops* or *Pastors*. They were such Pastors as were more than our Modern Presbyters; for they were proper Bishops: They had the entire Pastoral Care of the Flocks which the Holy Ghost committed to them, which Modern Presbyters have not: Whereas you by calling them only *Pastors*, would seem to insinuate

from

from him, that they were only such *Pastors* as are your *Presbyters* in the Church of *England*, from whom, in *Mr. Baxter's* Opinion, they widely differ'd.

And it is the same way evident, that *your Purpose is served by this Omission.* For the word *Bishops* being left out, *Mr. Baxter* seems to answer your end, as asserting *Bishops* above *Presbyters* in the Apostolical Church; whereas had you put it as he, *Bishops* or *Pastors*, the Passage would have cross'd your End; by asserting a Superiority of Apostles and Evangelists, and other such General Officers, who were a sort of Archbishops over proper Bishops, but had said nothing of *Presbyters*, that you were to prove from him were Originally distinct from *Bishops*, tho' he declares the Scriptures say nothing of the matter.

You having solemnly profess'd, that you had no Design to serve by leaving out the word *Bishops*, I shan't pretend as to that to argue against you; you best know your own *Designs*; but that you could have none, I can't agree; because the putting in the word *Bishops*, entirely alters the Sense of the Proposition. So that if in this case I have taken a strange liberty of *Accusing* you, I am unavoidably forc'd to persist in it; with this Additional Charge, That you have Represented *Mr. Baxter* as looking upon that sort of Episcopacy as favour'd in Scripture, which he expressly declar'd he could find nothing there to favour. But because I had been so favourable to you in saying in this case, no more than that you were not over fair, you take encouragement to call upon me to justify my self for omitting a very considerable Part of his Sentence in my *Abridgment*: Tho' you are so wonderful Candid, that you won't say I did it to serve any Purpose of my own. Truly,
Sir,

Sir, if I must come to Confession, I was unwilling to Abridge Mr. *Baxter* as the Scholar did *Zabarel*, by Transcribing him; and for that reason I omitted an hundred things that in the opinion of some might, be as material as you seem to apprehend what I omitted in this case. But make you the most of what you have Transcrib'd that I have omitted, either there or elsewhere, if you can prove from Mr. *Baxter*, that he thought reading the Scriptures would convince a Man that there were Bishops above Presbyters, from the very Days of the Apostles, I'll own my self much mistaken. But you afterwards put me in mind, that in the Passage you cited out of the large Life which I omitted in the Abridgment, Mr. *Baxter* owns, that there were *Bishops superior to Presbyters in one of the Apostle's Days*. I grant he does say there was so, as to some Churches: But he at the same time says, that *he could see nothing at all in Scripture for them; which was any whit cogent*. And if not, I think I have proved the Argument from Antiquity upon this Head to be very lame and defective. But after all, instead of thanking me that I had dealt so gently, when you gave me such an Advantage. *you pray God to forgive me my licentious way of handling my Adversary!* But really, Sir, you cry out before you are hurt. Who would not pity a Gentleman so miserably treated, as to be told, that he was not *over fair*, when he brought a Proof, that if rightly produc'd, would have made directly against him.

But it may be you'll tell me next time, that it was not for this that you brought that Charge against me, (tho' I can't help apprehending that this, with the *erving your Purpose*, came in also for a share in the Commotion) but for my saying, that you *drew in Mr. Baxter as asserting, that*

it was evident to all reading the Scriptures, that there were Bishops over Presbyters from the very Days of the Apostles: Which you deny with such a vehemence, that you declare, if there be any thing like it in your whole Book, you desire to forfeit your Credit for ever. Really, Sir, I'm sorry you run so high. This looks indeed like one that is for having every thing he writes as perfect as is possible.

But I won't bear hard upon you. I only desire you to remember the thing we was upon, was this Expression in the Preface to the Ordination Office, *that it is evident to all Men diligently reading the holy Scriptures, and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles time, there have been these Orders in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, as several Offices.* Bishop Pearson, Dr. Hammond, and Mr. Chillingworth, whom you produce as Vouchers, do all assert this Expression justifiable: And Mr. Baxter with you comes next, and brings up the Rear.

Though I grant you don't in so many Words declare, that *he asserts that this Superiority of Bishops over Presbyters is evident to all reading the Scriptures;* yet you bring him in as in this respect of the same Mind with those that do assert it; and this is I think *something like the matter, tho' not exactly the same:* And so for this time your *Credit is not quite lost for ever:* Tho' might I be allow'd to advise you, it should be to be more sparing of it for the future, as you desire to avoid the *Aversion and Indignation of your Reader,* to which you seem so unwilling to be expos'd.

Though I think the Phrase of *God's taking to himself the Souls of Persons departed,* liable to great Abuse in a Publick Office, when used in the case of *Impenitent Sinners;* yet as long as you can't approve of saying, that God does this *of his great*

p. 56.

Mercy, (in which I'm glad to find you of another mind than you were of when you drew up your Answer to Mr. Taylor) I pass it over; only Querying what is become of the *Assent and Consent to all and every thing contained and prescribed*, When this is as much contained and prescribed as any part of the Office? And the Query returns, if you have no *Hope* in their Case. To me such a Declaration of Assent and Consent would seem to carry in it an *Obligation to use this Office in all Cases without unexcepted Variations*. The truth of my Story about Archbishop *Sancroft* I am as well satisfy'd in, as you in yours that you relate concerning him, which I won't say I find much question'd; because I would not allow my self to maintain a Debate with a Man, of whose *Veracity* I had so low an opinion, as to suppose he would obtrude a Story of that nature upon me, which he had not good Reason to believe was true.

Granting therefore the truth of your Passage, I only add, that had you liv'd in his Diocese, and he had given you a Dispensation, your Procedure would have been the more warrantable. But without such a Dispensation, I can't understand an omission of the smallest Phrase through Dislike, after such an Approbation of all and every thing, as the Declaration amounts to. But as for the Argument you draw from that Archbishop's own Subscription and Declaration, to his Sense of the Fitness of this entire Form, I can't see it has any thing in it, unless you can prove, that he did not change his Mind afterwards. For if it be but possible, that he might think that this entire Form was fit to be used over the Graves of all that died, (as many others have done before him) when he made the Subscription and Declaration; and might afterwards change
his

his Mind as to *notorious and impenitent Sinners*, your Argument drops of course.

This Office is plainly all of a Piece from the first beginning of committing the Body to the Ground. I don't say it was particularly *designed for the wickedest Men*; that's hard: But I look upon it as design'd for general Use, unless in the cases excepted; and that the Person Interr'd is referr'd to all along, would scarce be deny'd by any one that had not a Purpose that way to serve. But that when I join with a Minister over the Grave of a deceased Acquaintance, and hear him saying, that *God having in great mercy taken to himself the Soul of a dear Brother departed, he therefore commits his Body to the Ground, in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal Life*: I must understand the first part of the Paragraph of the Interr'd Person, but take the latter part of it as referring to all other Interr'd Persons, this is a Jest; and to make any thing of it, requires an Understanding of the same dimensions with the Colliers Faith: It requires a Man to See as the Church Sees, as well as Believe as she Believes. The same Sentence is much better express'd indeed in the Office for Burials at Sea: But as long as it remains unchang'd in the Office for Land Burial, I could not approve it, nor consent to use it. To me it plainly appears to go much too far, as I have signify'd before. But as for you, Sir, if you are not oblig'd to use the *whole Office over impenitent Sinners*, I'm very well pleas'd.

As to the *Design of the Church* in the case, indeed, I have little to say. If she design'd Discipline, and so to have this Office only Read over such as died in a Church that had Regular Discipline, she has been very negligent in having done so little all this time, towards the putting her

Designs in Execution : But as long as she has in the mean time requir'd, that the use of this Office, as it now stands, should be consented to by all her Dutiful Sons, except in such cases as she has excepted, I don't see her Design affords them any Relief : I think they must e'en satisfie themselves, like contented Children, with *wishing* that the Office was alter'd, as she does with *wishing that the Godly Discipline was restor'd*. If, however, you can keep in her Good Graces, and yet alter it as you see Occasion in particular cases, I'm very well contented. Let the *Canon* stand for a Cypher ; and not only this, but all the rest too, if your Governors please : Only ben't uneasy in being reminded, that the most dormant among them may be reviv'd, which others that have not yet fallen in with you, can't forbear thinking of, whenever you invite them. And suppose you should be call'd upon to keep *Can. 68.* (and you are really referr'd to it in your Diocesan's *Episcopalia*) that this would be a *Publick altering the Terms of Conformity*, is a Fancy for which I can see no grounds. That the *Canon* was *design'd* for nothing, but to *prevent indecent Delays and Neglects*, is not so evident to all that read it, as it may be to you. For if you must not *refuse to bury any Corps that is brought, in such a manner and form as is prescrib'd in the Book of Common-Prayer* ; then I should think you must not except any but such as are in the said Book of Common-Prayer excepted. And to do otherwise, appears to me to fall short of that Veneration for your Mother, which you are so much for in other Cases ; and not to be easily reconcilable with the declar'd *Affent and Consent*. For if you have thereby bound your self to use all and every thing contained and prescribed, in all cases that are not excepted, then must you be

that

that way oblig'd to use every Tittle of this Office, in all cases that are not excepted ; whatever was design'd, which you know we are very improper Judges of, where a whole Church is concern'd.

But still if you can *Omit* some parts of the Office in the case of notorious Sinners, without any *Inconveniencies following upon it*, I am satisfy'd that you take your own way : Only desire you would leave me in my own freedom from such a Bond as you have brought your self under. Or if you this way *suffer Inconvenience*, I envy you not your *inward Satisfaction*. But as for those topping Church-men, that deny Christian Burial to Dissenters, as Schismatics, I think verily they afford you no Argument : For, as a Minister may more easily be Suspended for omitting the Ceremonies of your Church, than for open Immoralities ; so may Ministers with much less Danger, bear hard on People that are wanting in compliance with the Discriminating Particularities of your Church, than on such as are defective in their Morals, which is notorious in many Instances.

After all, I cannot but *pity you*, that in such a case as this, you should be under an Obligation that appears so strait : But instead of *making it straiter than your Superiors have done*, I'm entirely free that you enjoy all the Liberty that they allow you : Only I must remind you, that there is a difference between *Silence* and *Allowance*.

I'll own you have given me more Light as to this Rule than I had before ; but still it has to me an odd appearance, that a Rule should be given to those that use the Reformed Kalendar, that only holds true according to the Ancient Kalendar, and may not always hold even as to that,

Of the Rule to find Easter-Day.

as my Friend hath observed to you. This is just as if you should tell us who use the Old Stile, that *Christmas* or *Easter-Day* falls upon such or such a Day of the Month, meaning according to the New Stile, which is not in use among us. Such a Method tends to Confusion. 'Tis not occasion'd by Persons *resolving to take some principal Word in a sense different from what was intended*; but by your intending a sense in your Words different from what is usual and common, without giving any notice of such an intention. But, how *unmanly is it in you*, instead of excusing such Confusion, to fall so foul upon my Friend, (to whom you are a Stranger) because he could not approve of such a Method, for the Reasons he gave you. You must give me leave to tell you, that had you known the Person, and his Worth, as well as I do, you would have had more *Manners* or *Charity* than to have Reflected on him in point of *Religion*, (of which the Holy Scriptures are certainly a better Standard than the Common-Prayer-Book) and more *Wit* than to make such a Reflection on one that is every way, by much, your Superior.

Of the
Apocry-
phal Les-
sons.

I won't say, that the Reading Apocryphal Lessons in the Church is in all cases absolutely unlawful. And yet supposing the doing of it may be in some cases lawful, I can't agree with you, that this is *of it self sufficient to make it lawful, for a Minister to promise to do it*, in the way your Church requires: For he may still fear that such a Promise may do more hurt than good; and while he apprehends he has ground for such a Fear, his binding himself by such a Promise would be unwarrantable. For my part, I can't see how a Minister in your Church can *take such Care, as that the peculiar Veneration for the Canonical Books shall not in the least be abated*. I doubt
after

after the utmost Care, this will be the case with some.

I cannot but look upon the Story I relate of the Man in the late Tempest, who had recourse to the Apocrypha under the notion of Scripture, as much to the purpose: For he was not only *in his right Senses*, but a *Conformist*; a frequenter of his Parish Church, and of no other place of Publick Worship: And tho' perhaps he might be first *led into the Mistake*, by having a Bible, in which both Canonical and Apocryphal Books were bound up together, yet he declares he was confirm'd in it, by finding that your Church ordered Lessons to be Read out of those Books, as well as the others. I am inclinable to believe this has often been; and you may see I have something like Authority on my side, if you'll consult my Answer to Mr. *Ollyffe*, on this Head. But for you to call it a *Dividing the Church*, to refuse to make a Promise in such a case, where the Consequence is likely to be so pernicious, is harsh: And by the same Rule, Any Attempts for a Reformation, must pass for *Dividing Methods*.

It is one thing to *bear with Weakness in Superiors*, and quite another thing to comply with them in what we are convinced has a mischievous Tendency. Many of us could yield in the former case, who yet think it our Duty to stand out in the latter.

If you are still of Opinion, *that many of the Apocryphal Lessons are more for the Edification of the People, than ANY of those Chapters that are omitted*, you must give me leave still to differ from you: And tho' you should be more Angry than you were before, since you have express'd it again, I can't forbear repeating it again, as *unmanly* as you think the Practice. For either this

is your Mind, or it is not: If it be, where's the *unmanliness* in telling you of it, and that I differ from you in it.

Charge the omitting Canonical Chapters as freely as you please, with unfitness to be Read in Popular Congregations, I'm rather for them than the Apocrypha. I can easily *answer it to God, and my own Conscience* too, that I put you twice in mind of what you asserted, which I think blameable: But I shan't attempt to argue with you about the matter, because I don't find you open to Conviction.

You may abound in your own Sense for me, so you'll leave me my Liberty. But as for your Exclamation against me, for leaving out the word *many*, the second time I repeat your Sense of the Apocryphal Books, it shews how peculiarly tender you are where Self is concern'd. I can assure you in the case, however, that I had *no Purpose thereby to serve*; if I had, I should hardly have express'd it in the very Page before: It was a meer accidental Omission that I did not exactly express it, as I had done in the Page foregoing; and it being express'd to your mind so very little before, prevents the danger of any ill impression that Omission might cause to your Disadvantage.

But really, Sir, to represent every such little thing, as inconsistent with *Christian Candor*, and *Common Honesty*, is, in my Apprehension, the ready way to tempt People to disregard you, when the time might come that you should have just Occasion for such heavy Charges. I shall only add, that whereas you tell me that I have in my Catalogue *inserted some Chapters which are not omitted*, had you been so Candid as to have pointed me to them, I could easily have told
you,

you, whether the Mistake was mine or the Printers.

For the *Mistranslation of the Psalter*, I refer you to my Letter to Mr. *Olyffe*. And for the *Athanasian Creed*, I still own the Explication it gives of the Doctrine of the Trinity is true, and agreeable to the Word of God: And yet I can't say, that whosoever does not Believe every part of it, shall be Condemn'd at the last Day. I can say, *all that believe not in Christ shall be condemn'd*, because Faith in him is in Scripture represented as necessary to Salvation: But I can't say the same as to every Article of this Creed; that they that believe not every part of it shall be condemned, because there are some of them that are not necessary to Salvation, tho' true if rightly understood. Tho' if I could say (as you) *That they who believe not this Explication, (which I own to be agreeable to the Word of God) shall be condemned*, I might assert it, *without including any but such as have Capacities and Opportunities of perceiving it so to be*: Yet I cannot go so far, because Persons may have *Capacities and Opportunities* of knowing divers Truths, and yet remain ignorant of them, without being in a Damnable State: And for that reason I can't approve the *Damnatory Clauses*.

Of the
Athanasian
Creed.

Upon the Head of *Episcopal Confirmation*, I refer you to my Letter to Mr. *Olyffe*; and so I might also upon the Head of *Canonical Obedience*: But lest you should think that too great a slight, I shall add a few Words concerning it. I agree that this *Oath* is then ordinarily offered, when a *Person is coming into the Diocese of a particular Bishop to Act under his Eye and Inspection*; and that a *Minister is not bound by his Oath to observe Canons which he himself dislikes, if his Bishop do not call upon him*: And yet I think it refers to some-
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thing besides the *future Commands of this particular Bishop*: That is its general Reference, it's true; but then there is withal a more special Reference to his *future Commands*, as Regulated by the *Canons*, which contain the Body of the Discipline of that Church in which he is to Officiate under this Bishop's Conduct: And this ought not to be excluded Consideration.

If you have Sworn a *sincere, ready, and submissive Obedience* to your Diocesan, according to the *Laws of Christ's Church*; then I hope you have Sworn to yield him such an Obedience as is due, according to the Laws of that Church with which you are embody'd, from an inferior Presbyter to his Bishop. And this I conceive is the very thing Mr. Baxter pleaded for. You add, this must be in all things which you think lawful. I grant it: For no Oath can bind you any farther. Nor did I ever meet with any thing contrary in Mr. Baxter, or any other tolerable Casuist. But, say you, *He made the Oath to have reference to the Canons, and to be an Oath of Obedience to them, and not only to a particular Bishop*. He did so: And yet I can't see any great difference between him and you.

For your Swearing to yield your Diocesan such an Obedience as is due from an inferior Presbyter to his Bishop in the Church of *England*, in which there is such a Body of Canons to Regulate Obedience; is, with me, much at one, with Swearing that you'll Obey this particular Bishop, in all his Canonical Injunctions, that are lawful and honest. It is enough that it refers directly to the *Canons but as they become the Injunctions of the Bishop*: It may yet remotely refer to the Body of Canons, (as far as they require things lawful and honest) by which the Bishop is ordinarily to Regulate his Injunctions. 'Tis true,
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the Bishop is not absolutely confined to them: No Man can deny but *there happen now and then Occasions for the Bishop to interpose, in cases not particularly touched by the Canons of 16-3.* But then, I conceive, the Bishop is either to follow the *Injunctions* of the Sovereign, or the Regulations of the Canon Law, as far as it is not contrary to the Statute Law of *England*: But these Cases are not so numerous, as that *this Oath could be designed with a view principally to them*, as you would suggest. It's much more rational to suppose the Oath refers to the Bishop's ordinary Government, (which is managed according to the Canons) than to extraordinary Cases: But as long as in those extraordinary Cases recourse is so usually had to the ancient Canons, to supply what in the English Canons is defective, it comes much to one in the Issue, take it which way you will.

And if tho' he is so much confined either to Ancient or Modern Canons, you will still say, *that every one of his Injunctions may be unlawful, even those that concern things enjoin'd by the Canons*; it seems to me an unusual piece of Freedom, and to carry in it a Reflection upon your Church. For I think hardly any Supposition can be more Disreputable to her than this; That a Bishop should require the very things that the Canons enjoin, and yet every one of his Injunctions be unlawful.

It would abate my fondness of any Church, in the Case of which I could see reason for such a Supposition. To suppose *he may enjoin unlawful things, i. e.* some unlawful things, (as you afterwards turn it) is tolerable: But to suppose *all his Injunctions*, even when Regulated by the English Canons, are about unlawful things, is really hard upon your own Church: And had I said
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any thing like it, I believe I should have had your severest Censures.

I never was the Man that asserted all Episcopal Government unlawful: But a submission to the Exercise of it, according to our Canons, is what I cannot Justifie, and therefore could not Promise, much less Swear. Tho' you hitherto *know little of the Grievances* it has attending it, you may know more in time, as others have done, that have gone before you, who have freely complained of them.

I have nothing to say against your *Demurring*, when any thing is enjoined which you think unlawful: only don't wonder when it comes to that, if they who thought they had bound you fast, charge you with a violation of your Oath: Which possibly might give you some Disturbance, even tho' your Conscience was clear as to your Obligation to refuse, after your *Demurring*.

You tell me, that whereas I represented you as charging me with *Prevaricating*, you can find no such thing in your Book; and if I will point you to the place, you promise me to expunge it. I therefore now point you to Page 146. You have not the Word *Prevaricating*, it is true: But when you tell me, that rather than this Oath should not appear *Egregious Dissimulation*, I put a Sense upon it which neither the Words nor Design can admit of, I think you have the Thing. You may, according to promise, expunge it at your leisure. And as for your *Harangue* that afterwards follows, you have made your self too well known to me, for me to have any room to question whether you would not declare it had a just foundation: But you would have done well to have considered, how you would have liked it in another.

I must needs say, I desire no more than you yield me upon this Head. Let *Obedience to the Canons be promised in this Oath, but when they become the Commands of your particular Bishop*; and let but every one who designs to Minister in this Church, be obliged first to be satisfied about such Canons as respect his own Behaviour, and to resolve to conform to them, and I have enough. For, Let it be on what account it will, that he that designs to Minister in this Church, ought first, to resolve to conform to the Canons, if he takes this Oath, he thereby promises Obedience to them, when they become the Commands of his particular Bishop. Nor can I see how he by this Oath could promise such Obedience to the Canons, when they became the Commands of this particular Bishop, unless he were first satisfied about the Lawfulness of the Canons. And if Obedience to the Canons, when they become the Commands of a particular Bishop, is promised in this Oath; then the Oath must be designed to give the Church Assurance that you will obey the Canons, when you are called upon to do so. Such egregious and palpable Mistakes as these I'll stand to; or will understand you better, when you give me Opportunity. But that you should be willing my Historical Account should pass as *nothing to the purpose*, I don't at all wonder; when I find others apprehend it so much to the purpose, in opposition to the Method of your Church, which you would have willingly pass for unblameable. But I have debated this Matter already with Mr. Ollyffe, to my Reply to whom I again refer you.

I shall only add, that whereas you pleasantly tell me, that *in my History I don't produce so much as the Form of an Oath of Canonical Obedience to a particular Bishop, imposed upon Pretbyters, except that after the Reformation*; I can't but think you
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must your self Smile, at the strength of your own Objection, when you consider that the Oath was the same before the Reformation as it was after it, excepting the particular Limitation to *things lawful and honest*. And when at the close of your Elaborate Reflections, you tell me, that *if my History proves any thing, it proves the direct contrary to what I would fix upon this Oath of Canonical Obedience*, you must suppose your Readers to be very Credulous. For I fix nothing upon this Oath but a design to support the Prelatical Government, as managed and exercised according to the Canons: And my History (if it proves any thing) proves that this has been the design of the Great Supporters of the Hierarchy all along.

As to Particular Canons, I shan't enlarge. You say, *the Excommunicating Canons are not so in force, that it is, in the least degree, probable, that a Minister will be called to join in the Execution of them: And therefore are not such as a present Minister is concerned in*. By which I perceive you are a stranger to what has pass'd lately in some Parts of *Yorkshire*, where so many Honest Dissenters have been Excommunicated, and more are threatened. Should I give you a Narrative, I doubt I might again *break in upon your Temper*. For I find any thing of History, that carries in it the least Reflection upon your Church, always disturbs your Spleen.

In the general therefore, when you intimate, that *I may as well say, that there may be obnoxious Canons in time to come, as say, these Excommunicating Canons may be reviv'd*, I shall only tell you, that the Good Humour of your Church is not so much to be depended on as you imagine: For these very Canons actually are lately revived in *Yorkshire*; and could some have their Will, you
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that are Ministers in the Church in other Dioceses, would sooner appear *concerned in them*, than you seem to be aware of. But if you han't a *Part in the Excommunications* you may be called on to publish, you are to be the Instruments of publishing them, right or wrong. And how to reconcile such a Proceeding with Conscience, is the Difficulty.

- As to the *Canon about Kneeling*, I must confess I could not promise Obedience to it: And whether your Reasons will convince me, I shall judge when I see them. And 'tis the same as to the *Canon about the Surplice*. The *Canon about the Refusing Communicants coming from other Parishes*, is not so antiquated as you seem to represent it. A late Prosecution upon that Head, is an evidence to the contrary. Suppose you can *Baptize all Children*, upon having due Sponsors for such as cannot be admitted in their Parents Right, and suppose I should have a like Latitude, yet there are a great number of worthy upright Persons that have not, and I know not why they should be imposed upon. I can't approve of the *Canon that forbids Private Fasts*: I can't think it *lawful*. And if you don't think there is *any occasion to enquire whether it be or no*, it does not follow, that others must be of your Mind. And if you can, if called on, *exhibit*, according to the *Canon, the Names of your Parishioners, who neglect the Communion*, I should think you might be likely enough to live to repent it. But as to these things, different Persons so differ in their Sentiments, as to Lawful and Unlawful, that to oblige all to promise Compliance, when call'd upon, is an ensnaring thing.

As for the *Management of the Episcopal Government by Chancellors, &c.* if you *heartily lament it*, I should think you should not Support it. However,

ever, it seems to me to *touch this Oath*. For, if you Swear to Obey the Bishop, you Swear to be Subject to his Authority, which (according to our Law) is exercis'd by the Chancellor of his Diocese. The Oath carries in it no confinement to the particular Will of the Bishop, which is comparatively of little Consideration: It refers to the Legal Exercise of his Episcopal Authority. I can't see how he that can't be satisfied with that, can take the Oath.

No Oath can really bind to things unlawful. And yet *if an Oath do but seem to bind to things unlawful*, I won't say, that it is absolutely unlawful in all cases; but I'll say it again, *I doubt it would be hard to prove it lawful to take it*. My Reason is this: Because it tends to abate the Sacredness of an Oath, and otherways draw into much Guilt upon Occasion. But you say, *'Tis very hard indeed, that in things wherein we are agreed, that an Oath cannot bind, it should yet seem to bind*. But as hard as it is, I suppose you can't deny but it may be so. *Herod's Oath* could not really bind him in the sight of God to Murder *John*, and yet it *seem'd to bind him*; it had such an Appearance of it, that it drew much Guilt upon him. *For his Oath sake* he ventured on the Sin of Murder.

You mention it as a farther Hardship, that *the seeming to bind, tho' it be certain it cannot bind, should be sufficient to prove it unlawful*. But there you mistake me. I don't say, that will be sufficient to prove it unlawful: I only say, *it makes it hard for you to prove it lawful*. And that I stand to, because of the bad Consequences that may be easily foreseen. When then you ask, *How can an Oath of Obedience to any Person, limited expressly to things lawful, so much as seem to bind to things unlawful?* I answer: The force of the Oath
seems

seems to reach to all the Particulars in which the Person Sworn to; may Legally exercise his Authority: But there being several of these things that in point of Conscience may appear unlawful, the Oath can't really bind to them, and yet may seem to do it, or else it could not give the Bishop an Advantage to press for Compliance by vertue of that Oath; in things which he may judge lawful; and they that are concerned may esteem unlawful. Here's an appearance of an Obligation at least, or else the Bishop could not press it as such: But here's no real Obligation; because no Man can be obliged by any Oath, to a thing he believes in his Conscience to be unlawful. If you will call the Trouble which many of your Ministers have often met with in the Ecclesiastical Courts, *possible Inconveniencies* only, be it to your self: I wish Personal Feeling may never force you to change your Mind.

I grant, we are not *without temporal Inconveniencies in our way*; nor can I conceive how any can expect it: But I distinguish between Inconveniencies arising from Personal Frailties, and from a Faulty Constitution. The odd Humours and capricious Fancies of particular Persons may create us Trouble, who are out of the Establishment; but we have no Law among us that leaves us at their Mercy, which is your Unhappiness. If you Excommunicate the veriest Wretch in your Parish, and he by an Interest at Doctors Commons can get an Absolution, you'd find you'd be *bound by the Decree* of the Civilians there to Absolve him. I don't mean you would be bound in Conscience, and in the sight of God; but you would be bound to it Legally, upon Pain of Suspension. And if you are not ashamed of *such Tyes and Obligations*, 'tis to your self; yet I beg of you don't boast. I think as far as

you are bound to see with the Eyes of Bishop or Lay-Chancellor, you have *put out, or shut your own*: Or at least you are contented the State should do it for you, who won't give you Liberty to use your own Eyes in such Cases, in which the Law (whatever be your own Judgment) requires Compliance with their Decrees, upon Pain of Suspension, or any other Punishment. If *upon this Re-examination of the Terms of Ministerial Conformity, you find little Reason to repent your own Engagements*, may you go on and prosper. I can assure you, I never yet repented keeping my self at Liberty from such Engagements, and I believe never shall. If you won't *envy* me the one, I'll give it you under my Hand I'll never *envy* you the other. Which is the best Agreement, by what I can discover, that You and I are at present like to come to.

For about the Method of managing this Controversie, I despair of agreeing with you. How can I? Since, tho' I give you your Liberty, nothing will satisfy you unless I take Measures from you, and keep within your Confinements: On which account, I can't well conceive a greater Jest, than your Second Admonition or Answer to my Postscript. I thought your First Admonition odd; but this has out-done it; certainly when the Third comes, you'll have brought the Art of Chicanery to full Perfection. But, Good Sir, Why mayn't I fix some Select Sentences before my Book, as well as you? If you apply to all the Nonconformists, what was meant of the violent Sectaries; why mayn't I apply to the Contenders for your Church, what agrees too truly, to but too many amongst them? Or, why should you engross, *Justice, Truth, and Charity*, to your self, and your own Party?

As to *Aggravations*, I don't see how they can be avoided, while every Abatement of the Veneration you think due to your Church, shall have that Name given it; or a Vindication of our selves, be represented as a *severe Censure upon the Conforming Clergy*. I never confined my self yet to the *Principles* of any Particular Sett of Men, nor do I ever intend it: And yet (if you'll give me leave) I will both *Esponse* and Defend the same Cause with the Ejected Ministers. And I can't see why I mayn't, as long as I agree with them in this; That Conformity upon the present Bottom, would to me, as well as them, be sinful and unwarrantable: And why mayn't I in this agree with them, while in sundry Particulars I differ from several of them, as they also did among themselves?

I can't see why this should be a strange thing to you, who Defend Conformity, while yet you differ in several material Things from sundry Conformists? *Union upon Scripture Terms*, I hope; I shall be ever for: But as long as I can't find the Scripture allows making any thing necessary to Communion, which those Sacred Volumes leave absolutely indifferent, I shall think they add to the *Scripture Terms*, who obtrude such things as Terms of Communion, which they pretend are *Lawful*, but the *Lawfulness* of which may be question'd by others as Conscientious to the full as themselves.

And how far soever I might be able to comply my self, (as to which I can see no need at present of Particularizing) I can't be fond of any *Constitution with Unscriptural Additions*. But why must you so often harp upon my *Historical Accounts* of things? If you don't like them, can't you leave them to others that do? I think them necessary to the right understanding the State of

the Question, (which at once Answers all your Queries) and the right judging of the several Matters in Debate between us. And if you have other Sentiments, you are free to pass them by.

My *History of High Church and Low*, shews how the Terms of Conformity have been understood; and how we are to take them, if we would not impose on our selves, or be imposed on; and makes it evident, that if a Man Conforms to the present Establishment, his Conscience is concerned, that he takes things in a Sense that needs no more *Salvo's* than could be justify'd from the general Management since the Constitution was settled. The Account of the Treatment of our Forefathers, shews the true Spirit of your Church, which I think ought to be considered by all that go within her Inclosures.

My *History of Subscriptions*, shews the gradually growing Care of your Church, to have all her Sons exact in their Compliance, in things in which we know not that she has a Right to impose; and to convince, that if we are not exact we can't answer her End. And if so, then I think we had better keep as we are, than attempt to Gratifie her; who will have Compliance in every thing, or else she won't own us. And as for

My *History of the Oath of Canonical Obedience*, It shews, that the End of that Oath is to Support the Hierarchy, according to the present Method of Management, which we can't fall in with, as long as several of the Regulations, which we are liable to be required to follow, are such as we apprehend we could not lawfully comply with. All together help to shew why we can't be *Conformists*. And if we can't *Conform*, we must be *Non-Conformists*.

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While you think these things *don't carry so much as the shadow of an Argument along with them*, others think them to be a substantial Proof of the Unaccountableness of your Method in urging to Conformity: But to what Purpose is it to Contend? If you will have my *Dissertation concerning the Authority of the Fathers, a Digression*, I cannot help it; as long as it proves that *Episcopal Ordination* that you contend for, is not necessary; and that your Proof of the Necessity of it is defective; whether you look upon your self as obliged to regard it, or no, you must give me leave to lay stress upon it: And so I shall upon all my Historical Accounts, tho' you were ten times more angry than you are.

As for your *Charity*, Sir, 'tis to your self. It is an inward Affection, as to which we can only judge by outward Expressions. I agree with you, that *our Charity may remain unaffected by our difference of Opinion*. Your thinking us in an Error, is very consistent with Charity: And so I hope it is on our side as to you: But still you must give me leave to look upon all those either on our side or yours, as utterly disown the Ministry of such as being duly Qualified for the Office, are set apart for it in the Gospel way, or deny a Brotherly Affection to Ministers and People, who differ from them in things owned to be Extra-essential, as a little *deficient*, at least, in that Charity, which is one of the most important and most divine Virtues of Christianity. But it should seem you are not defective in it, because you conceive *our Separation is unnecessary*, though your Church has forced it; and because you conceive, that *for the sake of Peace we ought to Conform* to you, in things which you can't convince us are lawful: (which is the case of some of the Terms of Conformity imposed both on Ministers and

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People) which, I must confess, I don't understand.

For tho' I as really believe that your Impositions are unwarrantable, as you do that our Separation is not necessary; tho' I am as well satisfied that Compliance with the present Impositions of your Church, would to me be sinful, as you are that such Compliance is your Duty; yet I can own your Ministers for real Ministers, and your People for Fellow-Christians, without making any Difference in my Estimation. And I should esteem the contrary Disposition, an evidence of a Defect in Charity on my side, and therefore can't forbear thinking the same of such a Disposition on your side. But before you argue any more on this Head, I pray consider whether there may not be some want of Tenderness that may dispose the Minds of some to Espouse such Principles as do narrow the Ministry, and throw certain Imputations on their Neighbours.

But I find my Carriage towards the Independents must be sifted, and my Congregational Brother must be once more Personated, rather than I shall not be made appear as Deficient as you in Charity. I'm contented: Only wish you'd put your self in my Case, and think how well you'd like it.

I'm as really for a *Ministerial Investiture* as you; and yet must declare ever since I had Thoughts about these Matters, I have been cautious of *Censuring* such as had not a Ministerial Investiture, *as not called to be Ministers, if I have found their Ministrations to have good Effects, in the Conversion of Persons to serious Religion.* How does it hence follow, that I am as much cramp'd in my Charity as you? The sequel is to discover it. Well, I'll try the matter for once. You say, *I acknowledge that*

that God approves of your Ordinations; and therefore, say you, that they are Regular, and such as the Scriptures warrant. Very well: I grant that your Ordinations, as they are a Separation of you to the Ministry, by Authorized Ministers, are approv'd of God, Regular, and warranted by the Scriptures: But I can't say the same of them as they are attended with Engagements to such a Submission to your Hierarchy, and such a Compliance with Impositions, as is requir'd by the Law of the Land. For in that respect I shan't stick to declare, that I no more approve of the Method of your Church, than of the Method of the *Brownists*. I no more think that a Separation to the Office of the Ministry, with such Clogs superadded, is approved of God, Regular, and warranted by Scripture, than I do, that a Separation to the Office without any concern of Ministers is so, where their judgment and help can be had. I no more think that God approves of your Engagements that attend your Ordination, than he docs of their Omission, that attends their Separation to the Office.

But you say, *You can't persuade your self that God approves of our Ordinations, because they are a Deviation from a settled Method, lawful in our own judgments, without a Necessity for such a Deviation; and such as the Scriptures don't warrant:* But you han't stated the Matter right. Tho' your Ordination, as it is a Separation to the Office, by authorized Ministers, is lawful in our judgments; yet as it is attended with such Clogs as I have mentioned, 'tis not so. Again, your superadded Clogs being unwarrantable, we have a necessity for a Deviation from you, to keep to your Phrase, tho' I must confess 'tis odd, to call a greater Conformity to the Rule of Scripture, a Deviation. Upon this Bottom I have as much

reason to disown your Ordination, as you mine. For I can say, that *your Ordination*, in the Circumstances of it, is a *Deviation from a settled Method, lawful in your own judgment, without a Real necessity for such a Deviation*. I can say, that the Clogs that attended your Ordination, are such as the Scripture don't warrant: And yet I dare not say, as you, that *I can't persuade my self that God approved your Ordination*, as to the Substance of it. For I am well satisfied, he will make allowance. And therefore I ought, nay I can no more absolutely condemn the *Brownists*, than I can you, tho' I no more approve of your way than theirs; or of theirs than yours. I am satisfied God no more approves of the Irregularities of your Ordination, in the unscriptural Clogs that attended it, than of theirs in the Omission of Ministerial Investiture. The Scriptures no more warrant your Additions, than their Omission. And yet I can't say, that you are not called of God to the Ministry, because of such Additions; so neither can I say, that those among them, whom God has qualified and owned, are not called of God to the Ministry, because of their Omissions.

But you tell me, *You thought it an indubitable Maxim, That we were obliged in Conscience to disapprove what it is our opinion that God disapproves, and to condemn what it is our opinion the Scriptures do not warrant*. I grant it, and for that reason I disapprove and condemn the Clogs and Engagements that attended your Separation to the Ministry, because it is my opinion, that God disapproves them, and the Scriptures do not warrant them: And at the same time, I disapprove and condemn the Omission in the *Brownistical* Separation to the Ministry, because it is my opinion, that God disapproves it, and the Scriptures do

do not warrant it: And yet I neither dare say or think that you are no Minister, because I am satisfied that you are in the main duly Authorized for the Office; or that they, if God has qualified and owned them, are not called of God to be Ministers, because I look upon their Qualifications, with his owning them, to be Evidences that he has called them.

You abuse me, when speaking of my late honest Neighbour, Mr. *Beerman*, you intimate, that I gave it as my opinion, that *such Ordinations* as his, are *often approved of God, and warranted in Scripture*. I might here ask you, as you do me in another Case, tho' with much less Reason, *by what Law of the Gospel do you give your self this strange Liberty of Accusing me?* I might say as you, *I pray God forgive you this Licentious way of handling your Adversary*. But I'll wave such Methods, and leave you to your own Ingenuity. I'll only tell you, that I never thought Mr. *Beerman* an Ordained Minister; I knew the contrary: Nay I knew that he never pretended to it. It is impossible therefore that I should say or think that *God approved his Ordination*. But this I did say, and will stand to it, That God did own him in the Use of valuable Ministerial Gifts, tho' he had not taken up his Commission. And in this I neither *forsake nor contradict my professed Opinions and Principles*, which I think it *unmanly* in you to charge upon me, till you can prove it. I don't prove a compleat Commission from God's owning any such; that is another great Mistake of yours: I only argue thence in proof of a Divine Call to take up the Ministerial Commission in the Scripture way. In this and all such Cases, I am for following *Gamaliel's* Counsel; which tho' it allows of Reasoning, in order to Conviction, yet I think excludes Censuring and Condemning

demning beyond what clear Evidence can justify : And indeed, I think it against divers *Rules of Christianity*, to condemn those who have not so much Light perhaps as we, who may yet be able to approve themselves to God, as acting in the Integrity of their Hearts.

The Consequence you draw from divers Passages of mine that you cite upon this Head, I thus far stand to, that I own *God cannot approve of the Ordinations of such as neglect what is plainly in my opinion required in Scripture* : And yet he may by the Qualifications he has given them, and his owning them, sufficiently testify, that he has called them to the Ministerial Office ; in owning which, I am so far from *contradicting my Principle*, that I act agreeably to my Grand Principle, which is this, That out of true Christian Charity, where the Substance is secured, (which in this case I take to be due Qualifications, and an aptness to spread Serious Religion) we are to make allowance for different Circumstances, in consideration that the Understandings of Men are not all of a size, nor their Light the same. And I must needs say, that by several Hints you have dropp'd in this and other of your Performances, I have great hope, that when you come to *Reason* better, your *Charity* will be more extensive.

If I do agree with Mr. *Dodwel* in the Principle you mention, I can still say, 'tis more than I know. I do indeed say and stand to it, that *there is little reason to expect that God should own those whom he had not sent*. For my part, I should think it strange, if he should own those in the Ministry, whom he had not qualify'd for it, and called to it. But I think God may call Men into the Ministry, and by qualifying and inclining them to the Work, send them into his Vineyard, and
yet

yet they omitting the Ministerial Investiture which the Scripture so often mentions, may not be so duly authorized as is necessary to prevent Disorders in the Church: And yet I won't Censure them as altogether unsent of God; because I reckon their Usefulness may be something of an evidence to the contrary. For so Souls are but sent to Heaven, for my part, I'll never quarrel, tho' it ben't in Mood and Figure. But say you, *If this Success can be found, where there is no Authority, then it can be no Reason to induce you to think that these Persons act by Authority.* Your using the Word *Authrity*, in the case where I used the Word *Sent* and *Called*, is the thing that confounds you.

I say therefore, I don't think Success in Ministerial Endeavours can be found where Persons are not called to the Ministerial Office: But tho' I reckon God's qualifying Men for the Work of the Office (in the judgment of those who are fittest to judge) jointly with his giving an inclination to it, and Success in Endeavours towards it in a way of Probation, a good Evidence that God hath called Men, yet I think the Approbation of such as have before been faithful in the same Office, and their giving them an Investiture, is necessary to their being *duly Authorized* with reference to others. And so I don't think that *Success cannot be where Authority is wanting*, but my Thought is, that Success (*i. e.* such Success as I speak of) cannot be, unless there be a Call to the Office, which yet (in my Apprehension) gives not *Authority* without a *Ministerial Investiture*: And so Benefit don't depend upon the *Authority* of the Administrator, but upon the Divine Blessing, which I know not how to suppose in such a case afforded to such as God had not called to the Office. I don't therefore argue from
Success

Success to *Authority*; but from *Success* to a *Call* to the Office: The way of being Authoriz'd for which, with reference to others, I look upon as sufficiently marked out in Scripture. But you intimate your Principle no more tends towards Mr. Dodwel's Principle than mine, tho' I say *it appears to me to tend towards it*. Your Principle is this, that *God can't be supposed to approve Irregular Ordinations*: And if by Irregular Ordinations you meant no other than such as are not warranted by Scripture, I'd then grant you, that you no more run into Mr. Dodwel's Notions than I do. But while you reckon those Ordinations Irregular, that tho' agreeable to Scripture, yet vary in a Formality from the Ecclesiastical Method, I can't help having other Apprehensions. For if God does not approve of such Ordinations as the Scripture warrants, for want of an Ecclesiastical Formality, then tho' you may *from the Goodness and Justice of Almighty God* charitably argue, that he will by some secret Methods supply Defects to Honest and Well-meaning, tho' Deluded People, yet I can't see but you must discourage People from expecting Benefit by such a Ministry, and disown their Ministrations. Now this is what I dare not do, in any case, where I find God owns Men to do good to Souls; and yet I can't approve of a neglect of Ministerial Investiture, which I think God requires, to prevent disorderly and irregular Intrusions. Take the matter thus, and I think your laboured Proof of my being here inconsistent with my self, comes to nothing; and only shews, that you argue against me, without taking my real meaning along with you.

For tho' you have cited many Passages from me, which you think support your Charge, yet if you'll but distinguish between God's *Calling Men*

to the Ministry, by qualifying them for it, and jointly with due Qualifications for it; giving them an inclination to it; and his giving them the Authority of Ministers before others, by a Ministerial Investiture, the Difficulty you raise from thence is solved with ease.

Thus in that Passage which you have so oddly glossed on, when I say, to suppose a special divine Influence ordinarily afforded in the case of Persons whom God never sent, is to represent him as subverting Order in his Church: All I meant was, that this Supposition, that Persons not Called to the Ministry should be succeeded like those that are, would overthrow the Ministry as an Office: But as to the Authority that arises from a Ministerial Investiture, I there say nothing.

Again, when I call upon you to reconcile the Validity of our Baptisms with the Nullity of our Ministry; and tell you, that if our Ministry is not valid, then our Baptisms are not valid; and, that I can see no Salvo in the case, and the like; if you'll allow me to know my own Sense, I assure you, all I meant thereby is included in Two things.

(1.) That where a Ministry is utterly disowned, you may as well plead for Re-baptizing as Re-ordaining. And,

(2.) That tho' we are well satisfy'd at present both about our Orders, and our Baptisms, yet should you prevail with our Ministers to renounce their Orders, our People must needs be wretchedly confounded; for that they would be cast into great Doubts, whether our Baptisms had been truly Valid. I'll shew you in short where the Difficulty lies.

If you disown our Ministry, you must look upon our Baptisms, as meer Lay-Acts: And tho' I know your Church is so Charitable under this Head, as to own the Baptism of those you call Lay-

Lay-Men, (nay, and even of Dreaming Midwives too) so far as to be against Re-baptizing, yet it may well be query'd, whether this Principle could give satisfaction to the People. The Reason is this, because there is no instance in the Holy Scripture of any one Baptized, but by Persons that had either an ordinary or extraordinary Call to the Sacred Office of the Ministry. And 'twas upon this account I said, that the *Scruples of our People upon this Head, were bottomed upon Scripture.* And I could cite to you many Celebrated Persons, both Ancients and Moderns that herein agree; that Baptism administered by one that is not a Minister, is absolutely void. So that in short, if you own our *Baptisms*, which are as irregular as our *Orders*, I think you ought to own our *Orders*. If you disown our *Orders*, and yet own our *Baptisms*, as the Acts of meer Lay-Men, you bitterly cramp and confound all that think Lay-Men have no warrant for any such Practice.

I can't say, that I am of that Mind; because I can't think that God on the account of the want of an exterior Formality, will reject such as are serious in their Application to his Institutions. I can't believe this reconcilable with that Declaration, that *he will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice.* And yet I think if you owned our *Baptisms*, you should own our *Orders* too: And that the same Reason will hold in the latter case as in the former.

Why do you so far own our *Baptisms*, as to be against Re-baptizing our People? Is it not for *evident Reasons taken from the Goodness and Justice of Almighty God?* Why don't you upon the same account declare against Re-ordaining our Ministers? Is it not as inconsistent with the *Goodness and Justice of God*, to suppose him to reject Per-

sons duly Qualify'd, and solemnly and seriously set apart for the Ministry in the Gospel way, on the account of a supposed Defect in the Character of the Ordainers, as to suppose him to deny his Blessing to such as were seriously Devoted to him, on the account of a Defect in the Authority of the Managers of his Institutions? If so, why don't you own our *Orders* as well as our *Baptisms*? Or disown our *Baptisms* as well as our *Orders*? Pray, Sir, consider this matter seriously, and think it not a light matter, to consult your own Reputation, at the expence of your Neighbours, without the least shadow of Reason. You will find upon second Thoughts, that your Scheme of Notions, more tends to this Principle, that the Benefit of Spiritual Administrations, depends upon the Authority of him that Administers, than mine.

For while I have Latitude sufficient to own the Validity of all such Administrations as God gives a Blessing to, (even tho' there may be a mistake or failure in the method of Management) 'tis plain, I lay not that stress upon the Authority of him that Administers, as you do, who (tho' you own our *Baptisms* while adminstred by Persons not Authorized, yet) deny our *Orders*, because you suppose, (tho' you have not proved it) that those who conferred them, had not sufficient Authority to convey them.

The next time you exclaim upon this Head, I beseech you, shew how you can disown our *Orders* without supposing the Benefit and Validity of Ordination, depends upon the Authority of him that Administers it; and how I can lay a like stress upon Authority, as necessary to Benefit, with you, while I own there may be Benefit, where there is not a duly convey'd Authority, and that in one sort of Spiritual Administrations as well as another. And I shall esteem it a favour, if you'll
add

add a good Reason, why I mayn't urge your owning our Baptisms, as an Argument you should own our Ordinations, since we have as much Authority for the latter as the former: And why the People mayn't as well refuse to be satisfied with our *Baptisms*, because they were administered without due Authority; as you to be satisfied with our *Ordinations*, meerly for that Reason.

As to the manner of Writing on each side, it appears to me a very fruitless task to attempt to abate either your hard Thoughts of mine, or your favourable Thoughts of your own Method; and therefore I shan't attempt it. You may applaud your self in the Review of the *two Passages in your Title-Pages*, and condemn mine in imitation of you, as freely as you please: You may go on to represent a Vindication of Nonconformity, as a representing Conformity to be a *complication of the blackest and most unpardonable Crimes*, and yet pass for as soft and gentle a Writer as you are willing to be esteemed. You may change the *Press* for the *Pulpit*, or the *Pulpit* for the *Press*, as often as you see occasion, and yet manifest a mighty concern, that your *Book may be as perfect as is possible*, if you think good: You may still represent the Ejected Ministers, as *not believing as they speak*, and do it with all the Candor in the World, and intending to commend their *Honesty* and *Sincerity*. You may transfer what I said of the *Posture* at the Sacrament of the *Eucharist*, to the *Season* of its Administration; without any Mistake or Misrepresentation. You may go on to represent an irrational Fancy as Parallel to a well-attested Historical Verity. You may still represent those as eager for their own *Impositions* in opposition to yours, who have no unscriptural *Impositions* to plead for. You may multiply

multiply Speeches for the poor Ejected Ministers, and put such Words in their Mouths, as make them ridiculous; and when you have done, tell the World they might have so expressed themselves with *Justice* and *Reason*, and do all this consistently with a due Respect for them. You again and again may make it known to all Mankind, that we *Non-Cons* don't care that the People should be sensible what it is they leave when they leave the Church of England, tho' every one knows that 'tis not in our Power to prevent it. You may say twenty times over, that we have for many Years written with such a concern against the Church of England, that we could hardly write with more against the Church of Rome it self, and yet avoid whatever might offend as far as was possible. In short, you may bring what Charges you please, I shall despair of convincing you you did amiss. He that can reconcile such things as these, may easily qualifie and soften any obnoxious Passages that could be produced, were they ever so numerous.

Your freedom in *repenting*, *revoking*, and *altering*, according to your Promise, that your Book might be *as perfect as possible*, is so generous and so conspicuous, and has given me such Encouragement, that I think you might very well expect I should gratifie your *renewed Request* of obliging you, by giving my self farther Trouble in *Remarks* of this nature, when my Time was so much upon my Hands, that I knew not how to employ it better, than in beating the Air, or playing at Cross Purposes.

I am glad you are so much for *Peace* and *Union*, as some Passages in your Writings discover you: And yet I am far from thinking you past Improvements upon that Head. But if I have injured you, I can freely beg your Pardon. A

Power to impose Rites and Ceremonies you are for. I don't say, you asserted that this Power must be acknowledged by all who fall in with the Constitution; (that's your mistake in your wonted wanner, tho' I cannot but wonder at the Liberty you give your self) I only said, that if this Power must be acknowledged by all that fall in with the Constitution, (which I think is evident from the 20th Article which they must Subscribe) particular Concessions will prove comparatively insignificant: And this I stand to.

I grant indeed, Governours may maintain their Power to make Prescriptions, and yet give up many things to the consideration of Peace: I'll add farther, that I'm very sensible that Persons may hold Conformity to your Church to be lawful, and yet may yield to several Amendments: But still I can't help being of opinion, that he that is persuaded that the Governours of the Church have ordered nothing but what if all would seriously comply with, is certainly for the good of the Church, can't be very forward to part with a Pin out of the Tabernacle. For, how could he, without being against the good of the Church? The instance you have given in proof of the contrary, reaches not the Point. For tho' Ill grant you, that while Sponsors are continued, it would be for the good of the Church, suppose all would seriously procure fitting Persons to stand for their Children, who to the Parents Care, should join their Instructions; and tho' one of this opinion might yield to the Alteration of the custom of Sponsors, and give it up to the consideration of Peace: Yet he that held that the general custom of Sponsors. (managed as things of that nature ever will be, with more or less Care, according to the Temper of the Persons concerned) was more for the good of the Church, than the forbearance of it, could not yield to that for-

bearance

bearance without being against the good of the Church. His giving it up to the consideration of Peace, would be to heal its Breaches, to the real damage of its Constitution.

Upon a review, I take the same liberty with you as you with me, of reminding you, that there is a solemn Account to come, in which we are to answer for every hard and injurious Word. And I would hope the Thoughts of it might have a due Efficacy in preventing such like Replies of yours for the future. But if you come to the Head of *Taxing*, I think verily Silence would be more for your Interest, than such reiterated Complaints.

Sir, you must excuse me, if I still think you have said nothing to that which I called a great Difficulty, as I before told you. You have said something about it indeed; but you have said nothing to it; Nothing that tends to abate or solve it. And well I may say so, since you han't toucht on that on which I laid my Strefs.

But that after all you must still contend with me about stating the Question, is a little peculiar. And it is yet the more odd, since you say, my stating the Question is *much the same with yours*. Since it is so, you have the less reason to complain. But while I think otherwise, you must no more think to Prescribe to me, than I desire to Impose on you. I must have less to employ my time about than I have at present, before I'll meddle with the Question as you have stated it: And if you don't like it as I have stated it, (when you own 'tis *much the same*) are you not unreasonable? How can you think this becoming a lover of Truth? I have stated the Matter in Debate between the Conformists and the Nonconformists in such a way, as I thought would set it in the truest Light, in my *Introduction* to my Second Part. When you think fit to give me your Thoughts

Thoughts upon it, I shall endeavour to be open to Light. But if we can't agree about *the Heart of the Controversie*, I see no great likelihood of good from our Debates. However, if I can prove, that Governors have no right to make such Impositions, in things which the Holy Scriptures leave absolutely indifferent, as obliges Inferiors to acquiesce in and submit to their Determinations; you may say what you will of *Lay-Conformity*, and *Substantial Unlawfulness*, and *the Heart of the Controversie*, I think any Man must own, that *Conformity is not a Duty*: And if so, we may be *Nonconformists without Sin*. Nay, it may (as Circumstances may be) be our Duty to refuse Conformity.

After all, I'm as ready *heartily to forgive you*, as you me. *But indeed*, (that I may return you your own Words) *I am very much concerned to find my self engaged with one, who could ever think such Methods of Controversie becoming or pardonable. Alas! it is not sufficient now and then to drop a favourable Profession, or a good Character: But the only thing that can bear up the Credit of Religion, in the midst of our Religious Differences, is a sacred and constant regard to Justice, Charity and Truth. As nothing in the World can give us a Licence to dispense with this, so nothing in the World can recompence the want of it in us. And therefore, for the sake of that Religion we profess, Let us shew by all our future Actions, that we are truly sensible of this. What I have said, you have made necessary; and therefore I hope will the more easily pardon, in,*

S I R,

Your Friend and Brother,

E. C.

F I N I S.

A N
ACCOUNT
OF THE
NONCONFORMITY

O F
John Rastrick, M. A.

SOMETIME
Vicar of *Kirkton*, near *Boston*,

I N
LINCOLNSHIRE;

CONTAINING
The Occasions and Circumstances of his Se-
cession from that Place.

In a Letter to a Friend.

L O N D O N :

Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns*
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at the *Angel* in the *Poultry*. 1705.



T O

Mr. *Edmund Calamy.*

S I R,

THE Account that you desire of the Occasion and Circumstances of my leaving the Church of *England*, (or rather of my Publick Station in it) and the Passages of the Archbishop's Visitation that preceded it, cannot well be given without relating the several Steps by which that Cession of mine came on, which you may please to take as follows.

Being by the Providence of God placed Minister over a large Congregation at *Kirkton* near *Boston* in *Lincolnshire*; tho' a Country Town yet of great Extent, scattering four or five Miles in * Length; the Number and Distance of the Inhabitants gave me a very sensible Concern, and I was very uneasy under the Burthen that lay upon me: I knew not what to do for so many Souls, that were also most of them so remote from my Dwelling, nor how to discharge my Duty in a Place, that (as a learned, pious, and worthy Clergy-man, my Friend, told me) was as large as some of the Diocesess in the Primitive Church. Catechising, and Preaching to such as would

* See Blome's *Britannia of Kirkton*, pag. 146. *The Villages Kirkton-Holm, near the Fen, and Skeldik near the Sea, (which are in the County Maps) both belonging to that Parish.*

come under them, was not all I had to do ; But (to keep to that which leads to the Matter you desire to be informed about) I could not forbear being concerned with such as would bring their Children to Baptism, or offer themselves to the Lord's Table, how to carry it, and answer the Church's Expectations, with Satisfaction to my Mind, and Fidelity to my highest Trust. In Catechising and Preaching, I could suit my self, my Doctrin, and Discourse to the Condition of the People ; But (by the Rules and Orders of my Publick Station) in administering Sacraments, and applying the Seals, (especially Baptism) I saw I must treat them all alike. Yet if Catechising and Preaching be to prepare Men for Sacraments for themselves or theirs, it undeniably supposeth, that the *latter* are not to be given to such in whom the *former* hath no effect, nor to their Children. Qualifications for Privileges I knew were necessary, but where *those* were wanting, it was impossible I should apply *these* without a relucting Mind. And therefore whatever I might have been in the Capacity of a Lecturer, or bare Preacher, yet as a Pastor it could not be, that I should be unconcerned in Acts of Discipline and Government, and in judging of my own Ministerial Performances of that kind. More particularly thus was my Practise.

1. I was not satisfied to Baptize all the Children in the Parish promiscuously, let the Parents be what they would. But because it was seldom, but that one or other of the Parents (Father or Mother) was at least Civiliz'd, I actually refus'd to Baptize none but the Bastards ; where the case of the Parents unfitness (by their scandalous Sin) to give their Children a Title to Baptism, was more plain : And yet it was not all these I refused neither. My course therefore was this :

When

When any such came to me to have their Child Baptized, I used to reprove them for their Sin, to bring them if I could to Repentance: And I told them, if at the time of Baptizing their Child, they would publickly in the Church declare that their Repentance, and renew their Baptifmial Covenant in Terms, and promise Amendment for the future, I would Baptize the Child, otherwise I would not. Some of them were willing to this, and did answer publickly to the Questions which I put to them to the foremention'd Purpose, and their Children I Baptized: Others would not submit to this, and theirs I refused. It's true, I had no power in the Church's Constitution to do this, till they had been Presented, and so should do Penance; but it's likely that they did not know but I had: They having had also one good Use there before my time, (tho' contrary to the Canons) *viz.* for the Father to appear with his Child at the Font, as well as the Sureties. So tho' the Ecclesiastical Court might have looked upon my formentioned Practise as an Usurpation of their Authority, (as the King's Commissioners did the like thing in * *Mr. Cartwright*) yet there was no notice taken of it. Tho' for not Baptizing the Bastard Children of the impenitent Parents, I was afterwards Prosecuted and Troubled, (as shall be farther related in due place) as I was also much blamed for it by the People, as too Rigorous and Cruel, to make the Children suffer (they said) for the Parents Faults. As to the bringing scandalous Persons to Repentance, (called Penance) either it was necessary or not; if not, to what end were the Ecclesiastical Courts, in which they were presented? If it was, I must either do it my self, or suspend my Application of their (claimed but) forfeited Rights and Privileges till it were done. And as to the re-

* See the
20th Article
against
Mr. Cartwright
in *Fuller's Church Hist. Brit.*
Book 9.
p. 290.

fusing Baptism to their Children, I went upon these grounds; I thought the Promises and Privileges of the Covenant do not run in a carnal Channel, but to Believers and their Children as such, (excluding Unbelievers and theirs) as the Tenor of it. Else might the Children of *Heathens* and *Turks* be Baptized as well, consider'd as such, and under their *Heathen* Parents Tutorage: But if not, then neither may theirs who are to be accounted as *Heathens*; and then also there is a difference, and a judgment of that difference to be made. If *Englishmens* Children, as *Englishmens* only, ought to be Baptized, then why not the Children of any other Nation as well as such? Then would the Church of Christ, which is his Kingdom, and is not of this World, be turned in common with it. If it be said, ours is a Christian Nation, this implies that they are to be Baptized as the Children of professed Christians, but therefore not, if the Parents falsify or contradict their Profession, by Impenitency in some scandalous Sin. And I had read and considered, that if such have no Right themselves to be Baptized if it were now to do, then cannot their Children have a Right upon the account of any Interest of theirs. If the Children of Unbaptized Parents should not be Baptized, then neither the Children of such as have forfeited their Baptism, and the Right of it. Amongst the *Jews*, he that was Excommunicated, tho' with the lesser Excommunication, his Male Children were not * Circumcised. Neither should the Children of such as are Excommunicated, or that ought to be so, be Baptized; or those that are Presented by none but such as are as bad, and who also refuse to adopt them as their own, and to bring them up in the Christian Religion. It moreover seemed plain to me, that

* Goodwin.
 Mos. &
 Aar. 1.5.
 cap. 2.
 p. 200.

if the power of the Keys be, as well to judge who is to be admitted into the Church, as who is to be cast out, then ought not all to be Baptized; (which is their solemn Admission or Entrance) For what judgment can there be where none are excepted, but all taken in? This is clearly to take away the Key, and let the Door stand open.

2. I thought a solemn Transition of Persons Baptized in Infancy into a State of Adult Church Membership, by taking their Baptism upon themselves, and ratifying the Covenant therein made now in their own Persons, (which is the design of Confirmation) to be very useful and necessary: But I thought the Church's way of doing this was not practicable, (at least regularly and universally) by making it the *Diocesan's* proper Work: And I was amaz'd they did not see it themselves! since a Bishop came so seldom into the Country; and when he did come, did it in such Confusion, Haste and Disorder, Confirming so few, and those very oft the worst sort of People, who seldom understood or considered what they did. And that therefore the Charge seemed hard upon the Sureties to bring all the Baptized to the Bishop to be Confirmed. I therefore made much use of that Question in the Church-Catechism, *Dost thou think that thou art bound to believe, and do as thy Godfathers and Godmothers promised for thee?* I asked the riper and more intelligent Youth that Question in a more solemn manner, and told them what it answer'd to, and worded it more explicitly and emphatically, that they might make a more considerate and serious Answer: *i. e.* I asked them not only whether they thought they were bound so to believe and do; but whether they *did so* believe, and *would so do?* and ratify in their own Persons the

Covenant made in their Baptism? And I told the Church, that the Sureties, who thought they could not have the Children of their Charge to the Bishop, should bring them to the Catechism, where that might be done which is materially the same with Confirmation. And so should the Parents in the first place do.

3. In the matter of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, I was no less concern'd than in the former, that of Baptism. I could not admit all: And in so great a Parish, it may well be thought there would be many loose and scandalous Persons, and that some of them (altogether unfit for this Ordinance) would press to it. I thought I was obliged, as the Minister of Christ, (and not of the State or the Bishops only) to repel such. I thought that a living according to the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, renounced in Baptism, was to forfeit the Rights, Relations, and Privileges that came thereby; and that therefore a Suspension from them ought in that case to be made. This found me some Work. Some that offer'd themselves would take my Advice, when I thought them unfit, and dissuaded them from it; and would keep away, and not make much stir: But there was one especially, and he a Gentleman of the best Estate in the Parish, who would not be thus ruled. In the Year 1678, a little before *Easter*, I sent him a Message, by his Brother-in-law, to forbear coming to the Sacrament the approaching Season; for Reasons I then gave him: But he would not take it: But on *Saturday Easter-Eve*, he sent for me to the *King's Head* about it. I wrote to him, telling him, that if he would declare his Repentance for his former ill Life, and promise Amendment, I would admit him: But this not satisfying, he sent again, and I went to him. When I came
there,

there, he demanded, whether I would give him the Sacrament or no? And, having taken me into the Dining-Room, he clapt the Door behind him, and said, in a dreadful Rage, *We'll die together in this Room, but I'll know, &c.* — Upon which a Neighbour then in the House rush'd into the Room to prevent Mischief, and I urg'd him to Repent, and promise to Amend: But he refus'd, and said, *Must I make a God of you?* So I positively deny'd him, as one utterly unfit, in such a Temper, for such an Ordinance, and went my way. But this did not serve; for the next Day, *Easter-Day*, he appear'd in his Place, in the Chancel, amongst the Communicants, notwithstanding what I had said to him, expecting it (as I suppose) from me: But when in the distribution of the Bread and Wine I had miss'd him, or pass'd him over, he then in a Passion spoke, and ask'd me the reason of it? Which may easily be imagined was no small disturbance to us in so sacred and solemn a Duty. I said nothing to him, but only stept to the Communion Table, and read that Paragraph of the Rubrick before the Communion Office, that forbids the admission of such to the Lord's Table as he was known to be; and so went on to my remaining Work.

This done, I advis'd with my best Friends, the Ministers of mine Acquaintance, what I should farther do; that is, whether I should give the Bishop notice of it, as the Rubrick directs: But they dissuaded me from this, and told me, that would create a certain and troublesom Suit; whereas if the Gentleman should not Prosecute me himself, (as it was likely he would not) the thing would die, and Peace be upheld. So I took their Advice, and Inform'd not against him; and he at that time was silent, and gave me

no

no farther Disturbance, by any publick Law Procedure.

But the Noise that this made both in Town and Country was very great. All, except two or three, blamed me for what I had done; and no body would stand by me in it. The Congregation was so far from being offended at such Mens Communion, or pleased at my Endeavour to preserve it pure, that they were greatly offended at me for it. They cry'd, *What had I to do to meddle in that kind? Let every Man Examine himself,* and the like. So some time after this a Meeting was appointed by their means to make Peace (as it was accounted) betwixt the Gentleman and I. But the Ignorance and Strangeness in things of this nature amongst the Common People, that appear'd at that Meeting, I confess, I can neither forget, nor well express. My Business was to work him to Repentance, or to profess it, and promise Amendment, which was all I stood upon, and upon which I should not refuse him Communion. This he would not be brought to, or not to do it so seriously as to make it credible. I cannot remember that my Neighbours press'd him at all to it: Most of their work was with me, according to the foremention'd Sense they had of my Carriage in it. So, however in the close a Peace it must be, and I must receive the Gentleman again; which I did the next Sacrament, and for two or three Years after, without any more Disturbance at that time; tho' he was no better a Man than he was before, but rather grew worse and worse.

After this, and after all this tryal, I saw Cause, and thought it my Duty, to deny the Gentleman the Sacrament again the second time, (at *Christ-mass, An. D. 1681.*) But he came and talked there in the Church, (after my refusal of him)

as he had done before, to our great Disturbance; and my giving the Sacrament at the same time to Mr. *Richardson*, a Worthy *Non-Con* Minister, Sitting, did very much Provoke him, as appear'd by his Talk: And afterward he did not let it pass, as he had done before, but Inform'd against me in the Ecclesiastical Court at *Lincoln*, and procured a Citation, which the Apparatur served on me; and also, at the same time, and for the same thing, he brought his Action against me at Common Law; and sent for a Writ for me; which yet I think was not served. For my Neighbours procured another Meeting, to be now at *Boston*, before Mr. *Morland*, the Minister there, who needs must have the hearing of this Case, and be entreated to reconcile us. He came to us, but said nothing, that I can remember, to any purpose, and after a while went his way and left us to our selves. This Debate was managed much after the old rate, and the Issue much the same: A Peace it must be again, (tho' I bore no ill will to his Person.) My Neighbors agreed to allow the Gentleman all the Charge he had been at, (such was their Respect, tho' they blamed me for these Rigours as they accounted them) and he was to stop all Proceedings. And so he comes to the Sacrament again without Repentance in him, or Remedy for me, in Cases of this nature. But none other in *Kirkton* gave me so much Trouble upon this account; only the Teacher of the *Grammar School* in that Town, being by me warned from the Lord's Table, *Apr. 16. 1682.* at *Easter*, upon Reasons that I thought required it, wrote me three very scurrilous Answers to the Letter I wrote him, that insisted but upon his Repentance, or Declaration thereof, and that to me only. But he troubled

troubled us not with his Presence at the time,
nor me by any after Prosecution,

Great indeed was the Disturbance that all this
gave to my * External Peace. But

* For the Gentleman
foremention'd gave out
that he hoped in a short
time to sheath his Sword
in my Heart's Blood:
And he, with others at
the Inn, drank on their
Knees to my Confusion.
And one of *Stamford*, a
Stranger to me, lying at
the King's Head in *Kirk-
ton*, in his Travels, hear-
ing the malicious Spee-
ches of two of mine Ene-
mies against me, left
word at a Neighbours,
to give me notice to have
a care of my self, for he
believ'd they meant to do
me a Mischief, when they
saw their Opportunity.

Whence I think ap-
pears the Necessity of the
Peoples Consent to the
Pastoral Relation. How
impracticable is it to
Rule Men Spiritually a-
gainst their Wills!

See *Bishop Patrick's
Notes on Exod. 19. 8, 9.
and Josh. 24. 22.*

what must I have done? The
Sacrament was not mine but the
Lord's; and should not a Stew-
ard be faithful and do his Ma-
ster's pleasure? Must I harden
them in their Sin, and administer
to their greater Damnation; or
contribute to their Deceit, and
make them think they took their
Life, when they were in danger
to take their Death? Must the
Holy Things of God be pro-
faned; and the Church endan-
gered by Infection, and by the
Wrath and Curse of God that
this might have drawn upon it?
Must the Weak be Scandaliz'd,
or Occasion given them to for-
sake and abhor our Assemblies,
where no difference was put be-
tween the Holy and Profane?
Nay, Must God himself be pro-
voked to forsake us? I knew the
Lord's Supper was a Feast, and
to be kept without *Leaven*; yea,
a Fœderal Feast, for Friends, and
not for Enemies; and for such
to be Entertain'd, had I been a
Member only I might not have
been so much concerned; but,
how could I *minister*, and not be guilty? Had I
any Power to Receive such as I had reason to be-
lieve the Lord Rejected?

The Truth is, I feared that the Congregation in general, after I had done what I did, was, even in *Foro Ecclesiæ*, too unmeet for such an Ordinance: And I scarce read a Book on the Subject, in which I did not meet with something that was fit to make me Tremble: The Book called *The Practise of Piety*, had told me when I was young of the fearful Estate of such as Received without Knowledge, and *the more fearful Estate of such as minister to them without Catechising*: And I had read of one of great Name, that said, He had rather lose his Right Hand, or Die, than give the Sacrament to a notorious wicked Person. And that it was the opinion of *Grotius*, The Seal is not to be apply'd to him to whom the Thing signified manifestly belongs not. And I knew the Sense of the Church of *England* from the Homily and Rubrick before the Communion, yea and even Canon 26. And if her Government would not, or rather could not, Reform the particular Congregations according to that Doctrine, I must either endeavour in my own to do it my self, or suspend my Ministerial Acts of that kind till it were done. Besides, by my not informing the Bishop afterwards of what I did, all the World might see that I designed not to touch them in the least in their outward or secular Interests, as they might have been by an after Process, if they had been presented in the Spiritual Court, and Excommunicated by it.

4. Another thing that greatly troubled me at *Kirkton*, (especially after I had been for some Years Minister there) was the publishing the Excommunications and Absolutions of the Ecclesiastical Court; for these commonly crossed my Judgment. With what temper or dislike I published the Excommunication of some *Arminians*

in the Town, I have almost forgot: But some time after, when they were Prosecuted by our Officers; upon the Act of Twelve-pence a Sunday, (and refusing to pay) had their Goods taken by Distress, I paid the Money for them myself, and redeem'd the Goods, and sent 'em them home. I knew they had their Faults, and that of Unchurching all but themselves, not the least. But, tho' I disliked their Errour, and earnestly endeavoured, in many Discourses I had with them, to Convince them, yet I could not deny but that many of them held the Essentials of Christianity; and tho' they came not to the Church, they failed not to worship God by Jesus Christ, in their own Assemblies, and (some of them at least) in their own Families also, which few of my Neighbours did: so I thought they should not have been Excommunicated meerly for their Opinion about Infant-Baptism, and began to doubt, whether I could justifie my having concurred or been instrumental herein.

But afterwards we had some other Persons in the Town that were Presented, (for not coming to Church, I suppose, or some such thing) and it came to an Excommunication. *That* I had no scruple to publish, because I knew they deserved it, being Loose-livers, and next to Heathens, without all Religion. But some of the Chief of the Town urged them to get their Excommunications taken off at the *Visitation* approaching, Penitent or Impenitent, that they seemed not much to regard. But I, knowing the Persons Impenitence and Unconcernedness about it themselves, was not forward to persuade them to get off. However, before Chancellor *Howel* they came to that End; and (which I grieved to see and think of) an Oath is put upon them to obey their *Ordinary*, which they must take, and did;

did, before they were absolv'd. But then this Absolution was to be published by me, tho' I knew that they were unfit for it. But (whether on Purpose, or upon some necessary Occasion, I have almost forgot) I went from Home that Lord's Day it was to be done, and a Neighbour-Minister did it in my place.

By this time I began to be sensible of the Snare and Burthen of Conformity; and saw that there was no abiding in that Publick Capacity and Station, with the discharge of my Duty and Trust, and with safety to the Truth, and the peace of my own Mind. This (as it put me upon many successless Attempts of a Removal to some lesser Parish, or Lecturer's Place, until my Scruples of the Terms of Conformity rose so high, as to check such Endeavours; and brought me then to many Semi-resolutions of giving up all, and quitting my Living; so it) disposed me to go out when the Door afterwards came to be open

When I first entred upon the Ministry, I had not much Doubt or Scruple in my Mind about the Terms or Matter of Conformity. Tho' I had known other Times, and some other Men, and seen the *Barth'lmew* Change, yet I did not take very much notice of it, being but twelve Years old; nor did I understand the Reasons of the Difference, nor the true State of the Case, when I was more capable of Considering it. Tho' I remembred the difference of Practise, and how Men talk'd, when I was a Child, against the Common-Prayer, and for Praying in a free manner, &c. And tho' I thought and hoped that Surplice and Ceremonies would be laid aside before I should come to be a Minister; and could have wish'd that I might have been excused some Conditions of Entrance when I did come to it, as

Sub-

Subscription, &c. which therefore I have thought since could not be done *Ex animo*, in the High-Church Sense probably intended; yet that which mainly satisfied me was, (next to my Education in the *University*) the Example of so many learned, pious, able and worthy Conformists that I knew, or was acquainted with in the Country round about where I was born, (*viz. Heckington in Lincolnshire near Sleaford*) Men so Eminent, that (as I have heard) it was observed by the *Londoners*, there was not such a Sett of Ministers, of their Character, to be found in the like compass of Ground in many Countries, as in the *Kesteven and Holland Parts of Lincolnshire*: But they were very Moderate, and indifferent in the Practise of Conformity. Now I thought it inexcusable, and shameless Pride in me to pretend to be wiser and better than such Ministers as these: Nor could I take a way which I could not Defend, or refuse what I could not Disprove, whatever little Misgivings I might have in my Mind about it.

But when I was in the Ministry, and settled at *Kirkton* aforesaid, where Burials of the Dead were more common, I was in the first place soon awakened to consider those charitable Passages (as they are called) in that Office, which suppose a strict *Discipline* in the Church, and the Persons bury'd thereby to be of the number of the Faithful. These Passages I had but little encouragement to use often; and therefore I commonly altered some of them, and left out other some. For I durst not wish my Soul in the case or state of the most I bury'd, nor contradict my Preaching, by pronouncing them all saved, or but probably so. Tho' at the Burial of such as I had hopes of, I altered not a Word. I could not perceive that this was taken notice of at first;

nor was I ever Presented or Prosecuted for making this Alteration: Tho' at last it came out, and I was bitterly exclaim'd against for so doing. Some little Alteration I also made in some other of the Offices; as in *Marriage*, putting the word *Honour* for *Worship*; the latter sounding harshly, and being excepted against by many, (tho' whether justly I say not, *Worship* is used as a civil Term) but the former is warranted by 1. *Pet.* 2. 17. *Honour all Men*: And 3. 7. *Give Honour to the Wife*, &c.

As to the main of the Common-Prayer used in the ordinary Worship of every Lord's Day, I thought it sound for the *Matter*, but not well ordered for the *Form*. And therefore I always omitted the concluding Prayer of *St. Chrysostom*, with the Benediction following it, when the second Service was to be read: For I thought it odd to make an end, and seem to dismiss the People with a Blessing, and then presently to begin again! And I commonly left out the Lord's Prayer at least once, being it was so often repeated. I never suffered the People to Respond in the Psalms and Hymns. I seldom said the Versicle *Lord have mercy upon us* twice together. I always read that Prayer in the second Service for the whole state of Christ's Church here on Earth, before the Sermon; because of that Passage, (*That the Congregation here present, may with meek Heart and due Reverence, bear and receive thy holy Word*) which supposeth the Sermon to follow. I seldom read the Collect for the Day any more than once, as I remember, &c.

If now it be asked, How all this could suit the Engagements I had laid my self under to a strict Conformity? I only say, that as to the point of *Canonical Obedience*, I did at first think as I was taught, *viz.* That I was the judge of the *Licita*

& *Honesty*: But as to the *Ex animo* Subscription, especially the *Assent* and *Consent* Declaration, I must confess I did begin to chew upon that, upon the mention'd Occasions: And if it was not to be taken with a latitude, as most Ministers of my acquaintance said, I knew not what to say to it. And thus I have told you what Experience taught me to think of the Government of the Church of *England*, and also of high Conformity to its *Liturgy*; and all this before I had read any Books about it, but what were for it. The Hints were but few that I met with in my reading to set me against it.

But in the Year 1679, Mr. *Baxter's* Nonconformist's *Plea for Peace* came out, with some other of his Books of Church Controversie soon after; which as soon as I heard of, I procured and read. And *An. Dom.* 1681. came out his *Treatise of Episcopacy*, which I also read. These Books gave me a fuller Account, and a clearer Notion of Conformity and Nonconformity than ever I had before; and I did not think that the Case had been such as I hereby perceived it was. I was satisfied, that the *meer Dissenters* had a great deal of Reason on their side. I knew no true Answer given to the foremention'd Books of Mr. *Baxter's*. *Maurice* I read, but that gave me no satisfaction at all; it rather confirmed me in one Notion and Opinion I had before received, *viz.* That the ancient Bishops sat with their Presbyters, who concurred with them in their Governing Acts. It's true, I was not at first fully and absolutely resolv'd in the Case, at least what one should do that had Conformed in ignorance; but from henceforwards I was much more in doubt about it than I had been before. And particularly, whereas I had but slight Thoughts of what he said about Church Discipline,

pline, when (at the *University*) I first read his *Reformed Pastor*, I had other Thoughts of the Necessity and Usefulness of it now; and saw, that tho' we had reform'd Religion in *Doctrine*, and in part our *Worship*, yet (by reading also *Dr. Burnet's History of the Reformation*) I could not see that the Form of Church *Government* had ever been Reform'd at all, tho' so needful to be done.

Hitherto I have related the gradual Progress of my Nonconformity, in the Sense and Temper of my own Mind, and correspondent Practice; its Springs, Grounds, and Issues, or Effects. I shall next proceed to tell you what was farther done towards it by others, who at last took the Cognisance of several of these things, and made advantage thereof against me. Accordingly therefore,

5. Another Prologue to my Nonconformity, was the Concern I had with the Courts Ecclesiastical, and the Debates I had with the Church-Officers and Governours, as *Chancellor*, *Arch-deacon*, and *Bishop*. I found they were far from concurring with me in what I thought reasonable and just, or standing by me in the discharge of my Duty; they being always more zealous for the Observation of their own Rites, and for Obedience to their own Laws, than God's; conniving at the breaches of the latter, but punishing beyond all measure the breaches of the former, tho' never so small. So far from encouraging any Moderation and Temper, (whatever they say to invite Men into the Church) that it begat in me no good Opinion of the Constitution. To give you some Instances.

Aug. 28 1682. There being a Funeral Sermon to be preached, the Apparator egregiously disturbed us openly in the Church: For, while I was reading the Lesson for the Occasion, he came

up to the reading Seat, boisterously and insulting-ly, with Whip in Hand, and spoke to me, and ask'd, *Why do not you wear the Surplice according to Canonical Orders?* I said nothing to him, but went on. But in Prayer-time, before the Sermon, he made such a noise and stir to the Clerk to bring the Surplice out, that, when Prayer was done, I spoke to the People to put that Drunken Fellow out of the Church, which they attempted in vain. So he sat him down and slept out the Sermon, save that once (they said) he awak'd, and said, *I think he'll never have done Babling.* And I went on and bury'd the Corps without the Surplice. This disorderly Action we signified to the Chancellor of the Court, Dr. *Howell*; (one of the best and learnedest of that Order of Men) and we moved that the Apparator might be put out of his Place; and at the *Visitation* following, I spoke with him about it. But (after all) the Apparator was continued in his Place, and Chancellor *Howell* fell hard upon me, and reprimanded me for not wearing the Surplice at Funerals, upon which Occasions he understood I used it not. But I asked him if I should wear it when it rained? He said, *No*; but asked, *Did it rain?* I answered, I was not bound to accuse my self in answering that Question; but I told him, that there might be Causes that would justify or excuse the not wearing the Surplice at some times, as much as a shower of Rain at least: To which I remember no reply that he made. But now, if I could not be quiet in the Exercise of my Ministry, without such rude and violent Assaults as these, it was very hard. But the Surplice was a small matter in comparison of some others.

Apr. 30. 1684. The Gentleman, my Parishioner, whom I had repell'd from the Sacrament, as is before related, appear'd against me at the

Visita-

Visitation at *Boston*, publickly in the Church, before the Archdeacon, Dr. *Cawley*, accusing me for not Baptizing two or three Bastard Children; and for giving the Sacrament to Mr. *Richardson* Sitting, (a worthy Nonconformist Minister in my Parish, who scrupled the Gesture of Kneeling) and the like matters. So in the Afternoon I appear'd before the Archdeacon at his Inn; and found that I had been accused about my Method and Order of reading the Common-Prayer. And when I gave him my Reason, (according to the purport of what is before mention'd) he said, *That was a Presbyterian Principle*. But when my refusing to Baptize the Bastard Children was discourf'd on, I thought to have justify'd my self by the Exception in the 68th *Canon*, which I thought had extended to *Christ'ning*, as well as *Burying*; and that no Child of a Person or Persons Excommunicated, or deserving to be so, (by Impenitency after some grievous and notorious Crime committed) ought to be Baptized: And that the fault was in the Court, by neglecting to bring their Mothers to Pennance. But the *Canon* was brought, and otherwise expounded by the Archdeacon, who affirmed, that I had no power thereby to refuse or delay to Christen any Child whatsoever, (or of what Parents soever) brought to the Church to be Christned. And indeed it is plain, (tho' I understood it not till then) that the Exception is to the Person deceased only, (as to Burial) and not concerning the Child brought to be Baptized or Christ'ned. But when I told him my own Opinion about it notwithstanding; and that it was reasonable and scriptural to proceed upon the Grounds I went on, and urged the ill and absurd Consequences of a general and promiscuous Admission, he said, *That was a Presbyterian Principle too*. And that was all I got of him; save only some few Hints, as if it was in-

tended to Proceed against me for these things :
But I heard no more from them at this time

Aug. 9. 1686. The Archbishop's Visitation was held at *Boston*, by the then Bishop of *Peterborough*, (*White*) and Sir *Tho. Fxton*. The Country ringing of his violent Carriage in the Southern Part of the Diocese, (*Buckingham* and *Bedfordshires*) and I hearing what kind of Men of the Clergy the Bishop fell upon with the greatest Fury ; I went to the Visitation at *Grantham*, (the next before ours) to observe his Proceedings, that I might be the better prepared what to say and do in answer thereto at *Boston*, and not be surpriz'd. There I understood, that the Bishop intended to make a Tour by *Kirkton*, to see its Fair and Cathedral-like Church, as other Bishops had done before him ; and I must be there in my Gown to wait upon the Bishop ; who, how he stood affected to me, I partly guess'd, by the Discourse one told me was had of me at Dinner at the Visitation at *Grantham*. So on *Saturday, Aug. 7.* in the Afternoon, the Bishop comes, lights out of his Coach, and (I meeting him at the Church stile, he) pass'd by me without taking any notice of me by Word or Gesture, and into the Church he goes, and I after him. But when he came into the *Chancel*, he found that that made him open his Mouth : For things were not ordered there according to the High Church Mode, as it may be he expected. The *Company of Mercers* having been altered, (as the rest of the Corporations in *England* were) some of their New Members sent down Orders to have the Communion Table set Altar-wise, and Rail'd in : For they are the Patrons of the Living there, and dispose of the Parsonage Tythes ; and so concerned themselves about the *Chancel*. But those here who concerned them-

themselves about it not knowing how to do it, (for I, glad of their Mistake, willingly let them go on in their ignorance) they had set the old long Table End-ways, (but in the East-End) as it had stood before; and Seats about it, for the People; and one long Rail, that just at the top of the Steps cross'd the Chancel from side to side, and Spikes upon the Rail. Here was work enough for the Bishop. He ask'd, *What did the Spikes do there?* and ordered them to be taken out by *Monday Morning*. Then he ask'd me, *What were those Seats for?* I told him, for the People to Sit on. *Why*, says he, *Do you Sit at the Sacrament?* I answer'd Yes, when the *Psalm* was singing. *Psalm*, says he, *What have you to do with a Psalm at the Sacrament?* So then I told him plainly; My Lord, at Communion Times we have the Communion Table brought down into the *Body* of the Chancel, and go not within that Rail all. *Aye*, said the Bishop, *By what Rule or Order do you do that?* I told him, By the Rubrick in the Common-Prayer, that ordereth, that the Communion Table should stand in the *Body* of the Church or Chancel, where Morning and Evening Prayer are wont to be said. To this Sir *Tho. Exton* reply'd, *That is but, except it be otherwise appointed by the Ordinary.* Said I, Sir *Thomas*, There is no such Exception. So then they called to see the Surplice, suspecting, as I conceived, whether we had one. I was glad of this; for the Common-Prayer-Book lying in the same Chest, I was resolv'd to let them see the *Rubrick*. So the Chest being opened, I took up the Book, (which lay upon the Surplice) and

It's true, there is no Law for the use of the Singing Psalms at the Lord's Supper, (or indeed at any time) but as I remember it was commonly used at that Ordinance in all the Churches that I was acquainted with.

turn'd to the Rubrick, and read it, and said to

Now tho' 'tis true the Ordinary has power to Appoint the Place where Morning and Evening Prayer are to be said; as to alter the Pulpit and Reading-Seat from one side or part of the Church (or Chancel) to the other, when the Church is new Seated suppose, or the like, yet I conceive that must be done by a Court-Instrument, or an Order written and sealed after a Commission for View; which, had it been appointed in the Chancel at *Kirkton*, the People could have heard nothing, (the Steeple being betwixt the Church and Chancel) yet have they no power to change the Communion Table into an Altar, or set it at the East-end, or any where, save in the *Body* of the Church, or of the Chancel, if it must be there at all. Tho' I suppose that power given the Ordinary in the first Rubrick before Morning Prayer, to place the Reading Desk (as doubtless it is to be understood) was it they meant. So the Exception is not to the placing the Table, but to the Place of Prayer. And by that Rubrick, the Chancel is to remain as it was wont: So that if Service was not wont to be there, *Query*, Whether they had power to appoint it there? Or, Whether a Commission would ever have judg'd it meet to stand so inconveniently? And the Bishop, with *Sir Thomas*, or the Court at *Lincoln*, made no New Appointment at this, or any other time, to alter the Place of Prayer in the Church of *Kirkton*.

them, You see I need not go into the Chancel at all, but may bring the Table into the Church; for Morning and Evening Prayer are never said in the Chancel. To this *Sir Thomas* reply'd, that *the Second Service is to be read in the Chancel*. But I returned, There is no Second Service in the *Evening* Prayer, but the Table is to stand where Morning and *Evening* Prayer are wont to be said. To this they reply'd nothing. And as to *Sir Thomas's* foremention'd Exception, which I had let him see, was not there to be found, the Bishop's Chaplain said, the Exception was in another place; and he took the Book to turn to it: But after he had turned it over a pretty while, and found nothing of it, he silently laid it down, and they all turned their Backs, and went out of the Church immediately, and said not one cross Word more. But

in the Street, at taking Coach, the Bishop's Carriage to me was very much altered; for he drank to me in a Glass of Sack, (which our Churchwardens had provided for him) and he took me by the Hand, and gave me many familiar Instructions about the Administration of the Sacrament, which he would have me to celebrate more frequently, &c. But (tho' I believe I might have come off after this as well as most, yet) all this did not make me resolve to forbear, or suspend what I had prepared to speak at the *Visitation* approaching, in case the Bishop should proceed here as he had done at *Grantham*.

So the *Monday* following (*Aug. 9. 1686.*) the *Visitation* came on. And (after Sermon) when the Ministers were called over, the main Question which the Bishop put to every Minister particularly, was this, (as it had been before at *Grantham*) viz. *Have you Pre-examined and Catechised your Church-wardens upon all the Articles in the Book given them in charge, as one careful to preserve them from the guilt of Perjury?* This came to my dear and pious Friend Mr. *Scoffin's* turn (Curate of *Brothertoft*) before it came to mine; and when the Bishop spoke to the Chappel-wardens concerning him, Mr. *Scoffin* turn'd him about and earnestly entreated them to say nothing for favour or affection, but the Truth: To which the Bishop scornfully reply'd, *Oh! how careful you are to save them from Perjury!* But Sir *Tho. Exton* call'd for his Licence, and kept it; and so turn'd him out. When I saw this, I had much more Courage and Resolution to deliver my Mind to the Bishop, when it came to my turn; which I did, in answer to his foresaid Question, as followeth.

My Lord,

“ I have not examined the Church-wardens
 “ upon your Articles, and do think I cannot in
 “ Conscience safely do it.: (Here the Bishop be-
 gan to say something, and to interrupt me, but
 I begg’d leave to speak out what I had to say,
 and obtain’d it, and went on) “ For so tremen-
 “ dous is the Oath they take, (in my apprehen-
 “ sion) according to your Lordship’s Interpreta-
 “ tion of it, and Examination upon it, (an Oath
 “ which I durst neither impose, nor take for all
 “ the World) that I have no mind to have any
 “ hand in it. For, (1.) I think I should be ac-
 “ cessary (by so doing) to that guilt of Perjury
 “ which I foresee they will certainly bring upon
 “ themselves, and cannot be prevented by any
 “ such Examination or Advice of mine. (2.)
 “ Whereas that Oath of theirs, in the concur-
 “ rent Opinion of all Men that ever I convers’d
 “ with, us’d to be interpreted with *Latitude*,
 “ and suppos’d to be both impos’d and taken in
 “ a favourable Sense and Construction, with al-
 “ lowances, this way of Examination upon eve-
 “ ry Punctilio, puts upon it the most strict and
 “ rigid Sense that the Words are capable of
 “ bearing, and obtrudes it upon them according-
 “ ly, which makes their Perjury more direct and
 “ unavoidable; and for ought I know, may be
 “ a forcing them to present such things (or else
 “ be perjur’d) as by the Laws of the Land (Ec-
 “ clesiastical) may not be presentable. (3.)
 “ Whereas in the common Course, their Igno-
 “ rance might be thought in some certain small
 “ measure to excuse them, and take off some of
 “ the Guilt, this will make their Sin to be know-
 “ ing, wilful, and deliberate. (4.) I think they
 “ are Sworn to present such things by the Arti-
 “ cles,

“ cles, as in Duty to Christ, and Fidelity to his
 “ Interest and Religion, they ought not to pre-
 “ sent, if they did know of them : And I think
 “ I cannot Examine them upon the Articles, in
 “ the manner your Lordship would have me,
 “ but I must be guilty, not only of approving,
 “ or seeming to approve such Presentations and
 “ Proceedings, but even of promoting the De-
 “ sign. As for instance, If Neighbours meet
 “ together for Religious Exercises, it it be but
 “ the Ignorants going to a more understanding
 “ Neighbour’s House, on a Lord’s Day at Night.
 “ to hear the Minister’s Sermons repeated ;
 “ (when Judge *Hales* exhorted his Children to
 “ go to the Minister’s House to that end) if these
 “ be but called *Conventicles*, and the like ; My
 “ Lord, I like the *Informers* Trade so ill, that I
 “ tremble to think these poor Men should be
 “ Sworn to the Office ; and I had rather a Mil-
 “ stone were hang’d about my Neck, and I cast
 “ into the Sea, than that I should have the
 “ least hand in such Things, or part in such
 “ Guilt.

* When I had gone thus far, Sir *Thomas Exton*
 urged me upon my Declaration of *Assent* and
Consent to Conformity, made at my Entrance
 upon my Living : To which (directing my
 Speech to the Bishop) I gave this following
 Answer.

My Lord,

“ I have observed, that the Highest of our
 “ *Church-of-England-Men*, who Answer the *Non-*
 “ *conformists*, do understand and expound the
 “ Terms of Conformity (*Subscription* and *Decla-*
 “ *ration*, &c.) with a *Latitude*, and assert the
 “ necessity of a favourable Construction ; and
 “ wonder the *Dissenters* should insist so much
 “ upon

“ upon Trifles and Punctilio’s, like Men of very
 “ narrow and scrupulous Consciences: And I
 “ have ever been told, that the Practise of the
 “ Church must expound her meaning: *Lex*
 “ *currit cum praxi*, and *Lex non curat minima*,
 “ being Rules in Law: But I have, farther, to
 “ my no little wonder, observed, that when
 “ such as your Lordship comes to enquire into
 “ the Practise of some of us, you examine it by
 “ the Letter of Conformity, understood and
 “ expounded in the most strict and rigid Sense
 “ that can be: You urge upon us our Promises
 “ and Subscriptions, and you aggravate the least
 “ Omission to the Height: So that we are en-
 “ snar’d in this case, first courted in by plau-
 “ sible Constructions, and then rack’d, and
 “ scrud, and squeez’d at no rate: [I had al-
 most said, We are first gently stroaked and blind-
 ed, till a Bishop get upon our Backs, and then
 whipped, and spurred, and ridden most unmer-
 cifully: But I forbore that Expression, and went
 on, and said] “ But now therefore (my Lord)
 “ if Conformity be to be understood *strictly* and
 “ *rigidly*, without Latitude, in the Sense in which
 “ I perceive your Lordship expounds it, I do
 “ here declare my unfeigned Repentance of it,
 “ and beg Forgiveness of God and Man.

When I had said this, I stopt; and Sir *Tho-*
mas Exton cry’d, *Admonish him, Admonish him.*
 Said the Bishop, *Admonish him?* He must be *De-*
priv’d. Does he not say he Repents? And I
 spoke farther: “ My Lord, If your Lordship
 “ thinks I do Mischief in the Church, I must desist:
 Said the Bishop, *In the Name of God desist then.*
 I thought I must then have had my Living taken
 from me, and been turn’d out, as my dear Friend
 Mr. *Scoffin* had been a little before me: And the
 Book of *Canons* was sent for in order to make
 use

use of the *Canon* against *Revolters* against me. But having deliver'd my Conscience in what I had already said, as soon as another Minister or Town was called, I went out of the Church and left them.

That Evening, the Bishop sent for our Church-wardens to Mr. *Morland's*, Vicar of *Boston*, and examined them upon all their Articles, from the beginning to the end, (because I would not) and extracted from them these Six Articles against me, which I was presented and prosecuted upon, *viz.*

1. Our Minister doth not read the Litany on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays*.

2. He doth not constantly wear the Surplice in all his Administrations.

3. He doth not usually administer the Communion on *Christmas-Day*, unless it fall on a *Sunday*. Nor on *Whitsunday*.

4. We believe our Minister doth not read over the *Canons* and *Articles* of our Church twice *per Annum*.

5. There are two Children unbaptiz'd in the Parish, which the Minister refuseth to Baptize.

6. He converses with Mr. *Richardson*, an Ex-communicate Person.

This done, the Bishop bid the Church-wardens, tell me, that he desired to speak with me at his Lodgings the next Morning. Accordingly I went: And when the Bishop heard I was there, he sent for me up into his Bed-chamber, from amongst all the rest of the Ministers who came to wait upon him, and with whom the Hall began to fill: And there was I with the Bishop all alone for I believe an Hour or more; and he was much more mild, familiar, and conversible in his Discourse, than he had been the Day before.

His

His Design and Business seem'd to be to talk over again the Matters that had pass'd the Day before, and to give me his Instructions. So a great deal of Discourse he had with me about *Conformity*, the *Common-Prayer*, and *Ceremonies*, and the like. He understood (he said) I was a Man of Tenderness enough, but as to Conformity, defective in the External Part: But (he said) the least defection from the strictest Conformity led in Popery, which (he said) the Nonconformists industriously farthered. That all the Designs and Attempts for a *Comprehension* were Popish Designs. — He wonder'd at the Scruples of the Nonconformists, so Answered as they had been. Magnified the Publick Church-Service and Liturgy. — As to Closet-Prayer, (he said) it was but once mentioned in the New Testament. And for Pulpit-Prayer, *Tho. Cartwright* (he said) was the first that brought it up. — He said, The *Litany* was the best Body of Petitions perhaps in the World. — That the People might be brought to Devotion; which he pretended to assert from his own Experience; mentioning some Church into which he one time went, where he saw the People all upon their Knees, like People going to die: This was for the Gesture of Kneeling in Prayer. And for the Surplice, there was no excuse from it; which he confirmed from the necessity he was under to wear his *Rochet*, &c. But he seem'd to faulter somewhat about the case of the unbaptized Bastard Children; and mentioned somewhat of *Calvin's* Opinion about it, which how he represented I have forgot; but I think it was not disrespectfully. I urged, that the Bastard's Mothers (tho' presented) had not been brought to Penance, and then I told him one might as well Baptize the Children of Heathens as theirs, &c. So he said he would take care of
that,

that, *viz.* That they should do Pennance: Then (said I) I shall take care of the other, *viz.* That they be Baptized. (Tho' by the way, I should much more have respected their Repentance declared upon my Instance, than upon their Courts: The latter being more forced, and so its sincerity hard to be discerned; but the former more free.) But the Women were Poor, and there was nothing to be got by them, so they were never Censured, or brought to Pennance. And no Repentance would they shew or publickly declare upon my motion, as others in the same case had done.

In all this Discourse (tho' I said not much, yet) I told the Bishop plainly wherein I differed from his Lordship's Judgment, and that I did not think the Common-Prayer adapted to all occurring Cases, &c. And I retracted nothing of what I had said the Day before. I must confess, that I could not but extremely disrelish the fore-mention'd Discourse of the Bishop. He bid me read *Dodwel's Letters of Advice about Studies Theological*: Saying, If Faith may be given to any Man, I would give it to him. I enquired for the Book, but the Bookseller there had it not.

So sometime after this I was cited into the Ecclesiastical Court at *Lincoln*, (Twenty five Miles off from my Dwelling) to Answer to the *Articles* before-mentioned. But when I came there, there was no Proceedings against me that Day, but I was only to retain a *Proctor* against the next Court. That fell out to be the very Day, when King *James's* Declaration for Liberty of Conscience came first down into the Country: So I found when I came there now this second Journey, that the Court was very much down in the Mouth, and far from the heat and violence

violence in their Proceedings that I expected. To that Article about Conversing with Mr. *Richardson* as Excommunicate, the Judge said to some of the Court, that I might do that for his Conversion. — So my Answer to the Six fore-mentioned Articles being called for, and that it must be in Writing, I retired, and drew it up in haste, and delivered it in; they received it, and that was all that was done that Day: And I never heard more from them since about those Matters. Not having any Copy, I cannot now account for that Answer. I think as to the first Article, I answer'd, That I had read Prayers on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays* some part of the Year; but because of the Distance of my House from the Church, I desired I might be excused in that Particular. To the third, That we usually took a middle time betwixt *Easter* and *Christmas* to administer the Lord's Supper in, because *Whitsunday* was so near *Easter*. To the sixth, (though the Judge himself answered that) I believe I might answer, That Mr. *Richardson* was not Excommunicate, or not to be accounted so, because there was an Act of Indemnity came afterwards, which freed him from that Sentence and Censure that had once indeed been past on him. To the rest, I have forgot what I said, save to the fifth, I believe I might argue as has been already related: And plead the Bastards Mothers not having done Penance.

Soon after this, the Apparator came about with a Gratulatory Address from the Bishop of *Lincoln* for the Clergy to Sign, to be presented to K. *James*, to thank him for his Declaration for the Liberty aforesaid. This he brought to me. But as I never did (for one Reason or other) Sign any one of the many *Addresses* of those Times, so I refused to Sign this: Partly, because I could

not

not consent that any should have Liberty to Seduce the Nation from the Christian Religion; and partly, because I could not declare my Approbation of the Toleration of Idolatry; how industriously soever we may be thought (as Bishop *White* said to me) to farther Popery. Nevertheless, I was not without frequent Thoughts of quitting my Publick Station, and taking the advantage of that same Declaration, as I not long after did.

For now, tho' I had no reason to expect much more trouble from the Ecclesiastical Courts, yet my Mind grew very uneasie about what I had done in Conformity, and what I was in course farther to do, which I thought I could not well tell how to avoid. To be short therefore, these Two things pressed.

i. I was sufficiently satisfied, that what I did at my entrance into Conformity and taking my Living, was ignorantly and sinfully done, and what I thought not lawful to do again. And what the Judgment of the greatest Divines is in these cases, is sufficiently known. Archbishop *Cranmer*, in a Speech of his to the Lords, about the necessity of a Reformation, said, *If any common Error had pass'd upon the World, when that came to be discovered, every one was at liberty to shake it off, even tho' they had sworn to maintain that Error.* And Bishop *Hall* says, *A Man is bound in Conscience to reverse and disclaim that which he was induced unlawfully to engage himself by Oath to perform.* And I was taught by the best Divines also, that Repentance ought to be made as publick as the Sin; and that therefore it was incumbent upon me to make my *Dissent* as publick

*Burnet's Abridgment
Hist. Reform. Pag. 110.
Edit. 2.*

Prop. concerning Oaths
and Covenants, before
his Episcopacy by Divine
Right. Prop. 6.

as I had made my *Assent* to be; and therefore, in the same Congregation, to declare the one, where I had declared the other: But this I could not do without being out by the Law.

2. I was not easie in the Practice of what the Law obliges a Conformist to. Tho' I read the Common-Prayer, and wore the Surplice as much as most did; because I thought it lawful, and because I knew I was also obliged so to do; (the Cross in Baptism indeed I had begun to omit for some small time) yet I knew that in the Administration of the Sacraments I ought to make great Distinctions. I knew I ought to repel from the Lord's Supper, such as yet turbulently press'd thither, as I shewed before.

And for Baptism, tho' I had not such frequent Occasion with clear Reason to reject Infants brought thereto, it being seldom but one or other of the Parents was at least sober, (commonly the Woman) yet I knew there was too great cause to refuse more of them than were offered by such lewd Women as were obstinate and impenitent in their Sin, (of which latter I have given an Account before) and that upon account of the Parents great Ignorance, if not Scandal.

And I promised at my Ordination to Exercise the *Discipline* of Christ as the Lord hath commanded: And tho' it be added also, as this Realm hath received the same, yet I was satisfied, and it was plain from hence, (1.) That Discipline (that is, the Exercise of it) did belong to my Office and Order as *Presbyter*. And, (2.) I knew that where the Commands of Christ and the Practice of the Realm clash'd, I was bound to proceed according to the Commands of God; and where the Commands of Christ could not be Executed through the Condition and Defect of the *Diocesan* Frame, I was bound to Execute the
same.

same my self to the best of my skill, when it confessedly belonged to my Office: And,

3. Nothing was plainer to me, than that if it was my Part and Duty to Baptize, and give the Lord's Supper; it was my Part and Duty also to judge to whom they did belong, and whom to give them to: And by consequence also, to exercise a Judgment of my own about the suspending of these Rights, *i. e.* about Excommunication and Absolution. Or else I saw I was not Master of my own Acts in these things: And I thought if I must answer for my own Acts, I ought to be Master of them, and not another, that is not to answer for them for me. But it is well known I could have none of this power or freedom in my Publick Station. Nor would my People own or stand by me in the fore-mentioned difficultest Part of my Duty, so much as to declare themselves offended by the Scandals of their Fellow-Communicants, as by the Rubrick they are supposed to be. Tho' still, had I been in some places where there were fewer and more complying People, it's probable I had not gone out, if I could have gone on safely and comfortably in my Work; especially after I had told my Mind plainly to the Bishop, if that would have satisfy'd my Conscience as to my Sin of *Subscription* and *Assent* at coming in.

*See the
Life of
Bishop
Bedel,
p. 92.*

But as my Circumstances were, and my Mind framed, I at last resolved to withdraw. (Not now to mention the Bishop's charging me in the Name of God to desist from Publick Employment, which might be the effect of his violent Temper.) And therefore, having in several Sermons shewn Reasons why all ought not promiscuously to be admitted to Sacraments, either Baptism, or the Lord's Supper; I did in two Discourses more abridge Mr. *Baxter's Plea for*

Peace, and state the Case of Conformity and Nonconformity, and Retract my *Canonical Subscription Oath* and *Declarations* formerly made, which threw me out, *November 27. An. Dom. 1687.* after I had been Minister there Fourteen Years.

This might seem to be a very rash and desperate Action! But it may be consider'd, that,

1. It was no new or strange thing. Many Divines of the Reformers were at first Papists. And many Nonconformists in *Charles II.* time, had been Conformists before the Wars. Bishop *Bedel* was prepar'd for't, while he endeavoured to recover the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction out of his Court-Chancellour's Hands, into his own and his Clergy's Hand conjunct. *At least, (said he) I shall have the better Reason and juster Cause to resign to his Majesty the Jurisdiction which I am not permitted to manage.*

Letter to
Bishop
Usher in
Life of
Bishop Be-
del, p. 207

2. I knew I not only retained the same Charity, but the same Esteem and Veneration for the Learned, Sound, and Pious Part of the Church of *England* that I had done before, and therefore that I was no *Schismatick*, where I was not *Uncharitable*. Accordingly the *Christmas* after my going out, I received the Sacrament publickly at *Framp-ton*, (next Town to my own) at the Hands of my good Friend *Mr. Ishmael Burroughs*; (he allowing me my Gesture, for I did not Kneel) hereby explaining what I had done; and to show, that it was not from Schismatical Principles, or an avowed total Separation, that I had departed from the Church of *England*. Accordingly I after took all the Opportunities to hear all the able Conformist Ministers that I could, in all the places where I lived, resolving not to depart from the Publick Established Church farther than needs must. So I was the same Man still that I was when in my

Living:

Living: For then I heard all the Nonconformist Ministers that I could, as now I did many of the Conformists: Having a high Value, Honour and Reverence for able worthy Men of either Way: Tho' I exceedingly disgusted some of the Dissenters thereby, as I had done some on the Church side before. So that I often thought and said, (as the state of things is in *England*) that I was neither fit for Church nor Meeting. But who can help it?

3. I thought, (for all the cry against Schism) that what I did was capable of a good and charitable Interpretation, even amongst Conformists, by such as were willing to make it. For in a Time when the People every where might and would have private Teachers, it were better they had such as would teach them the Truth, than those who would lead them into Error. And perhaps if more and more able Conformists had stept amongst Dissenters, and endeavoured to preserve them from running too far; (as but too many of them were too prone to do) it might have been the best Service that in such a Time could have been done the Church: Especially if the publick Places they served in were very small, and they had but few People of their own to preach to. Not but that I did, and do really dissent from the Church of *England* as above and in my last Sermon expressed; but yet the strictest Conformists that think me to Err in this, may believe me to be Serviceable in the fore-mentioned respect, if the Reflection be upon my acting in a separate Capacity. And my Conscience beareth me witness, That in my more private Station in all the places where I have served, I have not been sparing both in Preaching and Practise, to express my self, and set my self against the Corruptions and Errors of Dissenters, tho' it has been so much to my hindrance and dis-

advantage in outward or worldly Respects. And I hope there are not many who will think, that a Dissent from the Church of *England*, in the mentioned things, is as dangerous an Error as those of too many Dissenters (or others) which undermine the Foundation of the Christian Religion.

4. And therefore I never design'd, by my going out, to Null the *Orders* I received in the Church of *England*, or account them Void. And tho' I never Preached in any place publick or private, from the time of my going out, till the *February* following; yet I resolved not to quit my Ministerial Office, nor lay aside my Work, (God enabling me) but to return to it when I should be called, tho' in a private Capacity in the Meetings of *Dissenters*. For I was well assured it was my Duty to Preach still as I could, notwithstanding I might not be permitted to do it in the publick Churches. Mr. *Baxter's* Apology for the Nonconformists Preaching, I could not Answer. And tho' Dr. *Stillingsfleet* (in his Sermon of the Mischief of Separation) take advantage of our granting a difference betwixt the case of Ministers and the People, as if there were no cause for the Peoples Separation, (which yet we believe not) tho' there may be of the Minister, and triumphantly say, *how the former can preach lawfully to a People who commit a Fault in hearing them, I do not understand*: I think it is easily retorted, and as plain on the contrary, *viz.* How the People can commit a Fault in hearing, where it is the Minister's Duty to preach, I do not understand.

5. There are few of the Conforming Clergy of the Church of *England*, but do pretend to be of the Opinion, and to say, That it was better for me to Nonconform than to Conform partially,

tially, and make the Alterations in it that I made; and did more ingenuously to go out, than to keep in at the rate that I went on. And this you see was Bishop *White's* Sense. And of our Governors, that made the Terms so high on purpose to keep Men of my Principles out of the Church. To which I shall only say: Either it was indeed ill done of me to make the foresaid Alterations, and very unreasonable, unjust, and without cause; or it was well and justly done, and upon good grounds.

1. If it was ill done, Why do they make such Alterations themselves? Why such Innovations in the Church? Is not Super-Conformity as bad as Non-Conformity, or Partial-Conformity? If it be asked, What Alterations do they make? I answer, What Law or Rubrick is there for the People's reading each other Verse in the Psalms, *Te Deum*? &c. Whose Common-Prayer-Book has that Versicle in it, (*Glory be to thee O Lord*) when the Gospel is bid? If they may add and alter at their pleasure, why may not we add and alter at ours? And this minds me of a Passage of one of the Bishops of *Durham*, (of which I have been credibly informed) who lying at *Tuxford* in *Nottinghamshire* in his way to *London* on a Lord's Day, he reprimanded the Minister of the Place, for saying just before the repeating of the Creed, *O Lord increase our Faith, of which we make this our Confession*. The Bishop told him if he had been in his Diocese, he would have Suspended him for that Day's Work; asking, Who order'd him to say these Words? Were they in his Book? &c. The Minister apologiz'd for himself, how usual it was in all places where he had come to put in those Words, &c. and (to be short) told the Bishop, that he thought his Lordship's pronouncing those Words, *Glory be*

See *Bedel's*
Life, p. 27.
28. 146.

to thee, O Lord, just before the Gospel was read, was the same thing, for they were not in the Liturgy: To which the Bishop reply'd, *Nay, now thou'st met with me, Parson,* — and call'd for a Glass of Sack to drink to him; and silenced with this Answer, said no more.

The like may be said of a greater and worse Change that may be added to the mention of the former, *viz.* Their turning the Communion-Tables into Altars, setting Candles on them, &c. so directly and expressly contrary to the Law, as I demonstrated to the Bishop. And why might not the Surplice as well be laid aside, and the Liturgy curtail'd? Does not this as much contradict their Assent and Consent, and Oath of Canonical Obedience, when both Rubrick and Canons appoint a Table? Besides, it may be considered, that the Alterations I made were on the side of the *Reformation*, concurring with the Sense of our first Reforming Bishops in the beginning

See Bishop *Burnet's* Sermon before the House of Commons on the Thanksgivings-Day, *Jan.* 31. 1688. p. 15. and his Letter from *Zurick* Edit. *Lond.* 120. p. 51. -- 54.

See *Fox's* Act. and Mon. Vol. 2. p. 700. And Bishop *Burnet's* Hist. of the Reformation, Vol. 2. p. 158, 159.

of Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign, who strove so earnestly with that Queen to have had the Habits and Ceremonies taken away, &c. But it's plain that their Alterations are on the side of *Popery*, unto which they seem to carry us back by the very Steps that the Reformation was made. For when Bishop *Ridley* could not prevail to have the Altars turn'd into Tables so universally as he desired, the *Council* sent down Orders to have it done, with Reasons shewing how much more proper a Table was than an Altar; especially since the opinion of an Expiatory Sacrifice in the Mass was supported by it. By

the same Reason I might well be cautious how I refused the Sacrament to such as would not Kneel, since it is well known the Opinion of Transubstantiation, and the real Presence is supported by that Gesture; and so it may seem a Symbolizing with Idolatry. And that these Usages and Alterations made in the Church of *England*, were counted Innovations in the time of *Charles I.* is plain from the Clergy's Consultation to remove them under that Notion. Of Committee at Westminster, 1641 which I remember to have read one remarkable Passage, of one of the Doctors of the Church, concerning the Candles on the Altar: Said he, *Let's not leave so much as an Emblem of an unprofitable Clergy in the Church, that fill the Candlesticks and give no Light.* And thus much upon the first Supposition, that my Practise was unreasonable and unjust.

2. But if the aforesaid Alterations of mine were justly made, and upon good grounds, then is my Nonconformity just, when I could not be permitted to make them in my publick Station, nor any moderate Exposition of the Terms of Conformity be accepted that would warrant them. And then, why such a cry against it? *Schism! Schism!* And why do even those cry up so loudly *The Church! The Church!* whose Ministerial Practises in it are so illegal, as if the Moderating them were the Church's Ruin, when yet its farther Reformation is so necessary, and would be its Honour and Security?

Nay, and (having mention'd it again) does not the very Humour of Super-Conformity make it more necessary to bear a little hard on the contrary side? (As such as consult their safety will do in a Ship or Boat, when it is in danger of Over-setting) and to bend the crooked Staff the contrary way before we lean upon't. when (with
other

other things of the like nature) I have heard Clergy-men wish for a Book of Sermons appointed by Authority to be read Annually, (as there is a Book of Common-Prayers) and bewail the want of it as the only thing lacking to the Perfection of the Church of *England*, (which was Bishop *Sanderſon's* Senſe, if *Walton*, the Writer of his Life, wrong him not) it might well make me pauſe. — What reaſon there is for the one more than for the other, I ſay not; but ſuch things were no great ſigns of an inclination or tendency to a Reformation. Except this was to light the Candles upon the Altar; or the way to make a more illuminating Clergy: And then, what need of Learning, and Universities to procure it? And were not this to take away the Miniſters Office of *Teaching*, as they had taken away his Office of *Ruling*? (And they may do the one as well as the other) And let but the People pronounce aloud a little more of their Liturgy, and then farewel the *Prieſtly Part* of their Office alſo. And then, what are their Livings and Eccleſiaſtical Revenues for?

6. Laſtly: As I never deſign'd to lay aſide my Miniſtry by this Action; ſo I went out with a full purpoſe and Reſolution of returning to the Communion of the Church, or rather a more publick Station in it, whenever the Bar of my ſo doing ſhould be removed; as I might have done if King *William's* Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſion, and the Amendments made thereupon by the Right Reverend Commiſſioners to that end had taken effect. And tho' its true, humanely ſpeaking, there is no hope of this as things now ſtand, yet it is decent for us, out of reſpect to our Governours, to profeſs and make known our readineſs to return to the Church upon reaſonable Terms: And to free our ſelves from the charge

of Schism, when it shall be apparent, that the cause is not in us, who *Desire* to come in, but in those who *Design* to keep us out.

In the mean time, I hope (in the strength of Christ) to abide in the true Catholick and Apostolick Christian Faith and Church, and in the true Protestant Reform'd Religion, and (as to the Church of *England* so called) a *meer Nonconformist*, not addicting my self to any one Faction, Sect or Party of Christians, as such, under what Denomination soever.

And if yet it be demanded, What it is I would have? I Answer: Any just, legal Settlement, that will not require me to contradict my own Judgment and Conscience, and that will allow me to be Judge and Master of my own Acts, and permit me to manage my Ministerial Function, according to the best of my skill, as a Minister of Christ, (and not of Men only, against my Master's Will and Interest, and to the Perdition of my own and others Souls:) Or, that will concur with *St. Paul's Ecclesiastical Canon*, (*Rom. 14. 3.*) *viz. To Receive into, and Reject from the Communion of the Church, according as Christ Receiveth or Rejecteth*; so far as it can be known by fit competent Judges, and those Ministers, and not Lay-men; and such as know them, and not strangers: Or, *Bishop Usher's Reduction of Episcopacy*: Or, *K. Charles II.'s Declaration about Ecclesiastical Affairs*. Any thing but Sinful Formality, Church Tyranny, and Faction, or what would tempt me to disown the Reformed Churches abroad, or scandalously seem to do so, I would comply with. In a word, the perfecting the Reformation of the Church according to what was at first projected in the Reign of *K. Edward VI.* would greatly please me. Yea, or what the Bishops, *Wilkins, Tillotson,*
and

and *Stillingfleet*, Judge *Hales*, &c. have more lately agreed to, would content me. And why should that be thought so strange and bad, that Kings and Bishops have so oft accorded with? And why may not a Minister be permitted to have as much liberty and power about Mens Souls, as a Physician has about their Bodies, who may use what Dispensatory he pleases, without being confin'd to an ill chosen one by Law. Nor would we exercise this power on any but Consenters, no more than they do: Nor deny the liberty of due Appeals to such as should think themselves wrong'd.

And as for the Right Reverend Fathers the Bishops, I am not against them or their Office, otherwise than as they would be sole Pastors of their Diocesess, and abridge the proper Pastors of their true Power, and make them Slaves to them, instead of Ministers of Jesus Christ, which many of them, I am satisfy'd, would not do. And, to speak the truth, I am so far from insisting on, or even wishing their Downfal, that I could earnestly desire they might shine in a higher Orb; and that they would be as Archbishops, and restore the Pastoral Power to the Parochial Clergy, according to *Bucer's* Projection, or any other just Method that might be concerted. Then would our Church Government be like that of the *Waldenses*, especially the *Bohemian* branch of them. And I have lately thought, that the matter of Succession and Apostolical Frame of Ecclesiastical Government, may better be taken from those Virgin Churches, than from the Papists. O what an Ease, methinks, should it be to their Shoulders! How can they answer for all the Souls in a Diocese in many Counties? And to do it by * others, is not proper in an Office of Skill, as the Lord *Bacon* hath shewn. And if the Clergy be Pastors,

* Ezek.
44. 8.

let them do the Work of Pastors. How easie should we account our selves if they were to answer only for all the Neglects of Discipline and Pastoral Care, and if their taking it upon themselves would excuse us at Christ's Judgment.

I know this desired Reformation is all called *Presbyterianism*! Which (by the way) may be considered either as including *Lay-Elders*, and then I am no more for that than themselves: But how meet are they to Except against this, when their own Government is in Lay-Hands? For, what have Lay-Men (of whatsoever Denomination, Civilians or Others) to do with Church Government? Or, it may be considered as importing only the Order and Office, and so it's plain our Brethren in Conformity are Presbyters themselves; tho it be *Priest* in English, it is *Presbyter* in their Orders: Only they think they are not to be accounted Presbyterians, because they are for throwing off the Governing Part of their Office. Those Conformists that are for retaining it, (as many (in Judgment at least) are) are Presbyterians themselves as well as we. Those that disclaim it are for obeying the Decrees of one at a distance, Stranger to the Persons and Cases, how contrary soever to their own judgment and Knowledge, and to Truth and Equity. Here now the Question is, To whom do the Power of the Keys belong? A Key is to let in, and shut out. Now we think these things plain. (1.) Where the Sacraments and Ordinances are, there is a Church. (2.) Where there is a Church, there must be a Door; else it is no Church, but Common. (3.) But to a Door belongs a Key. Now, how can the Work of them be managed right, when (1.) There is but one *Key-Keeper* suffer'd in many Hundred Churches? And, (2.) The Incumbent Pastors, upon every Occasion, have

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ten, twenty, or thirty Miles to go for the Key.

But all Amendments of this must be Stigmatiz'd; and *Presbyterian* must be the odious Name. Reformation is a good Word; and an easie; and they all profess to be of it; but this is a hard Word, that none but Scholars understand; and this must be made use of and abused; that it may be thought by the Vulgar to be a Monster; though it be the Name and Title of their own Order.

A just and necessary Reformation then is the dreaded, hated, and oppos'd Thing, whoever they are, tho' Bishops themselves, that are employ'd in Effecting it. But what should make them so abhor and resist it? And even Clergy-Men call it worse than Popery, and cry, *Rather Popery than it?* Possibly this may be partly accounted for, if I may be pardoned one little Story.

There was (as I have been credibly inform'd) a *Lincolnshire*-Minister in the Time of *Monmouth's* Commotion in the *West*, in great Perplexity, seemingly at least, to think what would become of him and his Affairs, which way soever that Matter should go. For, said he to his Friend, If *Monmouth* prevail, we shall have the Common-Prayer taken away; and *I cannot pray without Book*: And, If *Monmouth* fall, it will set up *James* so high, that we shall have the Mass; and *I cannot read Latin*: But if *Charles II.* had but liv'd, I'd done well enough, for I'm old D—g at Common-Prayer. Now,

Query, Whether this be not the true Case and Policy of many of the looser Clergy? Only with this difference, that of the two they can better read Latin than encrease their Labours, and amend their Lives, and do what a Reformation would

world require of them. *Ergo*, Rather Popery than a Reformation (call'd *Presbyterianism*.) If this be it, let them know, that such as they call Presbyterians, consented to the use of a Liturgy; and possibly could consent, that such Sermons as Archbishop *Tillotson's* should be allow'd to be read as Homilies by the younger and weaker (if pious, studious and sober) Clergy, till they should be able to do tolerably well of themselves; provided they were not imposed, but allowed in cases of Necessity. At least, if our Governors should so think fit, they would not refuse to come to the Establishment on that account, if any of the Clergy may be suppos'd at first so Weak.

But if this will not satisfy, then,

Query, Whether one of these two things be not certain, *viz.* 1. They that so say (*i. e.* that rather Popery than Presbytery) are Papists in Heart and Principle? Or, 2. That they are Enemies to the Reformation of the Church, lest it infer or bring after it a Reformation of Manners also?

But that a Reformation is necessary, the great Corruption of the World speaks. That the World is so bad, is visible, and All say it. That these are almost all (the Dissenters excepted) the uncensured Members of the Church of *England*, is also as certain. Now, either the Ecclesiastical Court-Officers can universally and regularly apply themselves to the Cure of this, (so far as their part is distinct from the Magistrate's) or not. If they cannot, confess they then the Defectiveness of the Constitution: If they can, (and do not) confess they then the Corruption of the Officers. Either of these calls for a Reformation of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, and to take it out of their (Lay) Hands, and put it into the
Hands

Hands of such as know better how to manage it; and by scriptural Reproofs and Applications, to melt a Soul into Contrition and Repentance; and can pray for the Sinner; as well as *admonish* him. And how comes all that Complaint of the Wick- edness and Degeneracy of the Age? The Vice, the Atheism, and Corruption of the Land; which we read in the Treatises and Sermons of Conformists of all sorts, if the Church, that suf- fers it without Censure, be so so Pure and Excel- lent, and the best Reform'd; &c. as is boasted? *Your glorying is not good*, said *Paul* of the Church of *Corinth*, that suffered but one bad Member a- mongst them, and it's likely, were yet *puffed up* with the flourishing state of their Church.

But yet I rejoice; with Thankfulness to God, that this Church hath Reformed so far, as it has done, in Doctrine and Worship, if not in Man- ners. It's all better so far than what they have reformed from. I rejoice, that so great a part of the Holy Scriptures is read publicly in all Churches in the English Tongue. How glad am I, that the Sound Christian Doctrine is preserv'd in the Church of *England's* Books, *Homilies*, *Ar- ticles*, and *Liturgies*, particularly in the Three Creeds; and the *Te Deum*; Truths whistled a- way by too many Dissenters, and it's well if not by too many also under another Denomination. I am glad the Church of *England* has so many worthy, learned, and pious Divines as it has: And of the Endeavours I have used to preserve amongst the People the deserved Reputation of the Ministers of the Places where I have liv'd, and to carry them with me to hear them, my Friends in those places can bear me witness; till the Cry was so loud against Occasional Confor- mists, and they were condemned as the worst of Men; which kept me more from Church than I

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was wont. Possibly there are few that rejoice more at the Queen's Bounty to them than I, tho' I'm never like to share a Farthing of it my self. The Universities as such I admire, their studious Leisure, their Society, their Libraries, which I earnestly desire the Preservation of, with all their Noble Fabricks and Endowments. Only the Reformation of them, and of the Churches, is the Thing desired. Why should Reformation upon Reformation be call'd *False Heraldry*, any more than oft sweeping the House, or weeding the Garden, or repairing their Walls and Fences? We declare, we would have no Wrong done to any, nor any body punish'd in Body or Estate meerly for being Censur'd by their Pastors, and that only when there is need, and those such only as have consented to their Oversight, &c. I am not without a deep sense of the Mischief of our Divisions, the Cure of which I think would not be difficult, if our Governors were but willing. I think a Good Settlement better than a too Extensive Toleration, yea a defective one (that is not Popery) better than a Toleration that is Unlimited. I could almost venture to say of the Moderate on both Sides, (amongst whom I am one; tho' the most Unworthy) that I verily believe the *living Child* (of Reformation) is ours; but rather than that it should be cut in pieces, let the Church of *England* take it; if it must be so, and the Will of the Lord be done. Or to speak clearly, I do believe that the true Method of our Peace and Prosperity is with the Moderate before mention'd, who have oft agreed on't; but rather than Paganism and Popery should banish Christianity and Reformation quite; it were better the Church of *England* stood; as it has hitherto done; than that all should be Ruin'd. Tho' tolerared Atheism and Vice will destroy any Settlement in the

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World;

World, as soon as any Toleration; especially when Christ's best Servants are Persecuted, as they have been by them. But they that will not understand Christ's Terms of Union, nor distinguish between the Tolerable and Intolerable, but treat all alike, and will Beat their Fellow-Servants, and eat and drink with the Drunken, may know what must be expected when their Lord shall come and find them so doing; which may by a Reformation be prevented.

For Christ can and will be angry where due
Pf. 2. 11. Homage is not done him; even with all those to whom he hath offered himself, and yet is rejected by them. And to despise and reject the Ministers of Christ, acting by his Commission, and according to the Tenor of it, is to despise and reject Christ himself: For *he that despiseth you (saith Christ to his Disciples) despiseth me.* And God to
1 Sam. 8. 7 Samuel: *They have not rejected Thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not Reign over them.*

And here it may be consider'd and query'd, Whether Christ be not rejected by this Generation in all his Offices of Priest, Prophet and King, by their rejecting his Ministers as they are Subordinate to Christ in the same, in the Three main Branches of their Ministerial Office?

1. As Priests? Whether they will not have a Minister to be a Priest in the sense he should not be so, (derogatory to Christ's Priestly Office) by joining him to an Altar? But deny him to be so in the sense he should be, *i. e.* as the Peoples Mouth to God, or having to do for Men with God, as in Prayer and Praise; And that by denying them the liberty

Not that I think that they mean this in the gross Popish sense; but do they not do that which hath a scandalous Appearance of it, and Tendency towards it?

of any free Prayer of their own, but making their Prayers for them, and tying them to a Service-

Book ; and by the Peoples assuming so great a part of their Office in their vocal, audible Responses ? And the like.

2. As Teachers, or Preachers, (under Christ as Prophet) by allowing their so seldom Preaching ; by clapping them down to Sleep in Sermon-time ; or taking some other Book to read in all the while ; and sometimes turning their backs and going out, as I have more than once observed : By magnifying and setting up the *Common-Prayer* above all Preaching : By not endeavouring sound Doctrine ; and hating to be reformed ? &c. And what would it be if they were to have their Sermons made for them, as many desire, (as I noted before) and Ministers were forbid Preaching (as by the High sort they are forbid Praying) from their own Ability and Skill ?

3. As Rectors or Pastors ? By taking the Keys from them : Appointing all their Juridical Acts without any Advice or Consent of theirs : (Yea, tho' against the faithfullest Minister's best Judgment) By their saying, as they in *Psalms* 2. 3. *Let us break their Bands asunder, and cast away their Cords from us* : By their accusing, maligning, and condemning Reformers, as Enemies to *Cæsar*, because they think they are for another King, one *Jesus*, (tho' his Kingdom be not of this World, but well enough consistent with earthly Empire.)
Query, Whether this be not a Refusal of the Yoke of Christ, and tantamount to say of him as they in *Luke* 19. 14. *We will not have this Man to Reign over us* ? And, whether we have not just cause to fear that it may incur his Indignation, according to Verse 27. of the same Chapter, which made a certain *Rutland* Minister say of the Long Parliament, in the time of *Charles I.* before the Army garbled them, *They have refus'd the Yoke of Christ, and he will lay them aside* ?

Now,

Now, *Query* farther; Whether that Minister that has all his Prayers, Sermons and Juridical Acts made for him, be not more his or their Minister that maketh or imposeth them, than he can so far be said to be the Minister of Jesus Christ? As a Judge, where the Judgment is made by others beforehand, and that that he must give (tho' never so contrary to his own) is but a Cryer; so is such a Minister, (tho' Christ's Cryers we are willing to be, *Isa.* 58, 1.) but as an Apothecary, and not as a Physician.

Not that I think it unlawful for a Minister to read a Prayer or a Sermon, &c. where these are not imposed, or not exclusively of his own Endeavours, and where there is a Variety allow'd him; because in this case he may make an Act of Judgment and Choice suitable to the People amongst whom he Serves, and there is room for the Exercise of his Skill: But where he is ty'd up to a Word in all his Ministrations; he is but as before is said, and is deny'd the Power that Christ has given him by calling him to the Office of Ministry in his Church?

And thus, Sir, I have given you my Case and Thoughts with as much Brevity as I could; and acquainted you with my poor Endeavours to discharge somewhat of the Ministerial Office, in a publick Capacity, under the present Ecclesiastical Constitution, (not without jeopardy of my life) and the issue of it. Tho' I do not say but another of more Learning, Worth, Parts, Prudence, Presence and Authority, might have done better; or even I my self in another lesser Place, tho' I am sensible of my own Weakness and Defects. The Lord of mercy forgive all my great Omissions and Neglects of the just and faithful Discharge of my Duty both in publick and in private. I earnestly desire the Reformation, and (in that) the Prosperity of the Church of *England*; that the Lord that sees our ways would heal us, when there is no health in our selves. I am one (tho' the least) of those that wait for the Kingdom of God, wherein all things shall be set right; and pray, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*: But if we reflect on *Malachy's* Words, *cap.* 3. 1-2. &c. and the awful Concern the Sons of *Levy* have in them, it becomes us to remember, that nothing but true Repentance is a fit preparative for it. The Lord bless your Labours. I am,

S I R,

Your unworthy Brother, and
Fellow-Labourer in the Lord's Work,

JOHN RASTRICK,



